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COMICS

THE GOLDEN AGE

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EDITED BY RON GOULART

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NORDLING ★ FINE ★ SCHWAB ★ WHEELAN ★ SIMON & KIRBY

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COMICS THE GOLDEN AGE

EDITED BY RON GOULART

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EDITOR'S PAGE

When I was asked to put together some issues of *Comics: The Golden Age*, I considered the proposition for a spell and then agreed. My main reason, aside from the princely salary, was because I welcomed the opportunity to present a somewhat wider view of the Golden Age than is usually given. You'll find superheroes and masked men in *C:GA*, sure, but there'll also be articles and picture features about funny animals, teenagers, crimebusters and cowboys and all sorts of other types who flourished in the comic books in the Thirties and Forties.

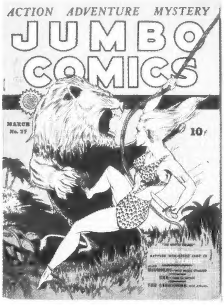
As I recall, I started buying comic books in about 1937, when I was a cute little tyke of four. Although the habit has persisted, I must admit that I remain fonder of the magazines I read and accumulated, doing my best to emulate Supersnipe, in my vanished youth.

You'll notice we've divided the issue up into what we hope will be fairly regular sections. Each time around you'll find a HERO PROFILE, detailing the comic book career of a relatively successful character from the Golden Age. Although Superman, Batman and Captain America aren't ruled out of participating, in the first few go-rounds we intend to pay attention to heroes and heroines who haven't been written about as much as the superstars.

Every issue will also contain a GOLDEN AGE INTERVIEW, a conversation with an artist or writer who was active in the heyday of comic books. And there'll be twenty-four pages of Golden Age reprints in our GOLDEN AGE PORTFOLIO. Material that, in most cases, hasn't been seen since it first hit the stands forty and more years ago. While the emphasis there will be on heroic types, we'll also fit in a few pages of comedy material each time around. Among our other departments is SECOND BANANA OF THE MONTH, wherein one of the lesser good guys of yesteryear is honored. WOMEN IN THE COMICS does a similar service for the distaff side. Attention will be paid as well to artists who did work of a less than serious nature and to those who are all but forgotten today.

In a burst of enthusiasm (and possibly vanity), I produced all the copy for this issue myself. But *C:GA* isn't going to be a closed shop and we welcome contributions to our various departments as well as miscellaneous articles. Send a query first, though, to me care of this magazine.

—Ron Goulart



COMING ATTRACTIONS/In our next issue we'll profile SILVER STREAK. Not to be confused with the train or the movie, this Streak was a fleetfooted, redclad superhero of the Golden Age and his fastmoving adventures were drawn by such artists as JACK COLE, JOE SIMON and DON RICO. There'll be an interview with GILL FOX, who's been a professional cartoonist since the 1930s. A friend and associate of Jack Cole, Will Eisner, Lou Fine and sundry others, Fox not only drew for but edited POLICE COMICS and SMASH COMICS. He also drew the sexy blonde TORCHY. Our featured funnyman'll be the one and only BASIL WOLVERTON. In our reprint section you'll find a BLACK TERROR yarn by the impressive team of JERRY ROBINSON and MORT MESKIN. The forgotten artist will be JIMMY THOMPSON, who drew ROBOTMAN and a lot of Indians. Look, too, for THE GREEN LAMA, DOC SAVAGE and POWERHOUSE PEPPER.

COMICS FEATURE

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James Van Hise, founding editor of **Enterprise Incidents**, contributor to Cinefantastique and Comics Scene and author of The Art of Al Williamson, presents the frenetic realm of animation and observes the heroes of our four-color fantasies;
Plus **Sam Kujava's Notes, T.I. Pavor's Collector's Corner, Dan Baker's Games** and **Steve Bissette's Books.**

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Feature News presents the latest events in the world of comic books, newspaper strips and animation...who is hired, fired and promoted...what new projects are planned and by whom...what planned projects are cancelled and why.
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Preview gives an advance look at a brand new title and talks with the proud parents, the writer, artist and editor that have brought life to the spanking new idea.
Finally **Publisher Pick's** points out a few of the more interesting books that have come out and briefly tells you why you may find them worth looking at.

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HERO ★★ PROFILE

If the Golden Age of Comics had anything it was heroes. Big heroes, little heroes, business-suited heroes and colorfully-costumed heroes of every shape and coloration. This feature will profile one of the stars of the 1940s every issue.

Some comic book heroes, although engaging and entertaining, failed to set the world on fire. One of the great also-rans was Skyman, a costumed crimefighter who had a decade long career and yet never quite made it into the top ten. Written originally by the same man who created the Flash, Hawkman and dozens of others and drawn initially by one of the better artists of the Golden Age, he still just missed superstar status. In the pages that follow we'll look into Skyman's origin and exploits, talk about the artists and writers associated with him and speculate some on why he didn't end up in the front rank.

The Skyman was in business for a full year before he got himself an origin. Although he first flew into view in *Big Shot Comics #1* (May 1940), the facts as to how he came to be were not made public until *Skyman #1* (May 1941). Therein readers learned how orphaned millionaire Allan Turner was raised by his crippled Uncle Peter, "a mighty genius" in the world of science. Thus nurtured, Allan grew to manhood much interested in things scientific. No bookworm, though, Allan was not just a brilliant scholar but an all around athlete as well. When chided by his genius uncle for developing a new kind of weapon in their home lab, Allan replies, "There will always be great scientists. I have decided to become better than that. I shall be a scientist-policeman, who will use his powers to prevent and overcome crime!" The origin story, by the way, was only three pages long and never did get around to explaining where Skyman got his distinctive red, white and blue

BUT ALLAN TURNER IS DRIVING LIKE A WHIRLWIND TOWARD THE SKYDROME - SOME MOMENTS LATER
POOR FAWN! SHE THINKS ME SO DETESTABLY LAZY!
IT WOULD NEVER DO TO LET FAWN KNOW ME FOR THE SKYMAN! IF SOME CRIMINALS I KNOW FOUND OUT SHE KNEW ME - HER LIFE WOULDN'T BE GOOD FOR A PLUGGED PENNY!
IF FAWN IS IN THIS BOMBING INVESTIGATION, I'VE GOT TO ACT FIRST! I DON'T WANT HER TO GET HURT!
OFF TO SMITHER'S BRIDGE ROARS THE WING-
WELL THAT'S THE BRIDGE! NOW TO SWITCH ON MY TELEVISIC-FINDER AND SEE WHERE THE EXPLOSION IS DUE!
THE TELEVISIC-FINDER, INVENTION OF THE SKYMAN, IS BASED ON THE USE OF THE COSMIC RAY WHICH PENETRATES DARKNESS AND ENABLES ITS USER TO SURVEY THE SCENE UPON WHICH IT'S "EYE" IS TURNED JUST AS THOUGH IT WERE DAYLIGHT.....
THERE THEY ARE, THE RATS! THEY'RE IN FOR A SURPRISE!
LIKE A BOLT FROM THE BLUE, THE SKYMAN IS ON THE WOULD-BE BOMBERS!
ALL READY, JOE?
YEAH- LET 'ER GO!

Skyman takes to the air to end a bomb threat. Note the last panel, Skyman's swoop down on the crooks shows Whitney's skill at suggesting body weight.

costume. Probably rich playboy Allan took some of his old polo togs, added an airplane helmet and cape and arrived at it that way. The uniform gave him a snappy, upper class look.

The most impressive of Skyman's anticrime inventions was the Wing, a practically bodiless red and blue airship that was packed with more gadgets than a millionaire's limo. It had robot controls and a "magneto-Stabilizer" that allowed it to hover

YOU KNOW I OPERATE A PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY- I WAS RETAINED BY MAYOR FOUX TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE RECENT BOMBING OF CITY OWNED BUILDINGS—
AND YOUR TRAIL LED TO BURTON EH? HMM!
SKYMAN! ALLAN TURNER'S A PRISONER IN THAT HOUSE DOWN THERE!
I KNOW. BUT DON'T FRET, I'LL RESCUE YOUR PRETTY DARLING!

Fawn Carroll was an excellent private detective but still somehow she never could connect Allan Turner with Skyman. It's a problem that investigative reporter Lois Lane would encounter later.

while Skyman climbed down out of it by way of a rope. Thus dangling he could swoop on malefactors or rescue Fawn Carroll, a pretty lady detective who got into more trouble even than Lois Lane. Despite the fact that Fawn was an ace investigator, she never got wise to the fact that Skyman, whom she idolized, was actually Allan Turner, whom she dated but kept trying to nudge out of his languid playboy ways. The inventive Skyman also cooked up the Stasimatic, a gun that could either paralyse or kill "as its user directs". A camera using a "high-speed neutronic beam" was yet another gadget he invented to use in his crusade.

Skyman himself was invented by the prolific Gardner F. Fox. When *Big Shot* was in the planning stages, Vincent Sullivan, the editor of such titles as *Action* and *Detective*, was hired away from DC. He persuaded several of his regular contributors to provide material for his new magazine. Among those he lured into the *Big Shot* fold were Fox, Mart Bailey, Ken Ernst, Fred Schwab, Creig Flessel, Fred Guardineer and Ogden Whitney. In his early twenties at the time, Whitney had already worked with Gardner Fox on Sandman and Cotton Carver, an sf adventure strip, at DC and he seemed the logical man to draw the Skyman feature.

Though Whitney's work was a bit reserved and well-mannered at first, he soon loosened up. He became very good at depicting the airborne action required in Skyman's battles against various foreign invaders, mad inventors and just plain crooks. What Whitney also became good at was doing something even more difficult than showing the figure in action. That was drawing it in repose. He seemed to grow increasingly preoccupied with this and soon people were to be seen sitting, leaning, slouching and sprawling all over his pages. Another thing he solved for himself was how to suggest that a body had weight. There are many well drawn sequences in which, say, Skyman lifts Fawn from a moving car and carries her up to the Wing.

Skyman occupied the lead position in early issues and quite obviously editor Sullivan considered him the potential star of the magazine. The closest thing to a costumed superhero that *Big Shot* had, Skyman shared its sixty-four pages with the Face, Marvelo the Monarch of Magicians, Rocky Ryan, Tom Kerry and Spy-Chief. Also to be found in each issue were reprints of the Joe Palooka, Dixie Dugan and Charlie Chan newspaper strips. (The magazine was, more or less, owned by the McNaught Syndicate and it was their strips you found amidst the original stuff.) Reprints of Sparky Watts were added with #14 (June, 1941). Boody Rogers' mock superhero, usually referred to as the World's Strongest Funnyman, was a hit and would eventually crowd Skyman out of the featured slot. With #15 Jeff Cardiff, hitherto known as Spy-Chief, bought a Revolutionary War garment at a curio shop. Donning it, he took to calling himself the Cloak. Other characters, such as Captain Devildog of the U.S. Marines, Raja the Arabian Knight and Captain Yank, came and went.

Skyman had already had considerable experience in repelling invaders of all sorts and when the United States entered WWII, he put his experience to use against the Nazis. By the autumn of 1942 he was operating off and on in Germany and Italy, no easy task for a man who flies around in a big red and blue airplane. Then 1944 saw another wartime touch when the artist started signing himself Cpl. Ogden Whitney. Apparently he was doing these while on leave and eventually his work ceased showing up at all. The best man to fill in for him was Mart Bailey, who was also drawing the Face. Fox had given up his aerial hero by this time and a fellow by the name of Ray Krank was providing most of the scripts. Skyman branched out to include the Japanese on his list of those he fought against.

Whitney returned to the feature in *Big Shot #67* (July, 1946). They announced the fact with a blurb on the cover and a typeset intro to his six page story inside. "Big Shot Comics is happy to announce the return of OGDEN WHITNEY to its fine art staff. After drawing SKYMAN for four years, Ogden enlisted in the U.S. Army. Now, back from the Pacific War Zone with a chestful of campaign ribbons and an honorable discharge, Ogden has settled down to the task of offering our readers the finest quality in comic strip entertainment." It was a different

Whitney who'd come back. His work was much more lushly inked, had a slightly cartoony look and was more candid in its approach to women. Cleavage and raised skirts were much in evidence and Fawn's bosom had miraculously enlarged. Still an expert at figure drawing, Whitney was leaning strongly toward what later came to be called Good Girl Art.

His first postwar adventure, which Whitney seems to have written as well, dealt with crooks. Then he began a continuing saga that was to drag on for over two years. Bitten by the sf bug, he launched Skyman on a trip to the Moon. The spaceship looked like a super-Wing. Although Skyman forbids Fawn to tag along, she, true to pulp tradition, stows away. While Whitney was away things had changed at *Big Shot*. Because of paper shortages and increasing costs the page count had dropped to forty-eight. Some characters were dumped, all the survivors had less space to operate in. The costumed hero craze had waned in the war years and the *Big Shot* covers were showcasing the more humorous features to be found within—Sparky Watts, Joe Palooka, Dixie Dugan, etc. Skyman, who was rarely allowed to so much as show his face on the front of the magazine, had a six page slot toward the back of the book. It's possible the sf serial was Whitney's attempt to bolster Skyman's diminishing fortunes.

COMMANDER STOP HIM!
YOU STOP HIM!
SEE? WAIT LONG ENOUGH, AND I STOP MYSELF!
I'VE LOCKED UP THE REST OF THE GANG IN THE CELLAR, BUT THAT WOMAN--SLUGGING GERMAN HAS DISAPPEARED!
WE MEET AGAIN, YAH? SO!
Ohh!
AT IT AGAIN, HEY? THIS TIME YOU GET HURT!
Aaghh!
SOME TIME LATER...OVER THE HOUSE OF PETER TURNER ...
SHE'S STILL OUT COLD--SO I'LL LAND, SET THE ROBOT CONTROLS WHICH WILL AUTOMATICALLY TAKE THE "WING" TO THE SKYDROME, AND BECOME THE "RESCUED" ALLAN TURNER!
YOU'RE NOT MUCH GOOD, ALLAN--BUT I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE SAFE!
THAT SKYMAN'S A WONDERFUL GUY, FAWN!

The story was an ambitious one, involving Skyman and Fawn with gangsters, escaped lunatics, scaly aliens, unscaly aliens, Martian dictators, Venusian pirates, Nazis and even Adolph Hitler himself, who is not dead but hiding out on the Moon. At one point Skyman is drugged by one of the opposition teams and forced to reveal, among other things, his true identity. Fawn is present, but later confides to a friend, "That was his way of tipping me off that he was really conscious but pretending to be under the spell of the drug! Why, Skyman couldn't possibly be the worthless Allan Turner!" Skyman, and the stubbornly unenlightened Fawn, finally returned to Earth in #94 (October, 1948). The attempt at turning him into a science fiction hero had not been especially successful. The seemingly endless space opera had all the right props, yet was mostly hokum and familiar melodrama. The Skyman, after a handful of further earthbound adventures, expired with #101 (May, 1949). *Big Shot* itself lasted for just three more issues beyond that.

Compared to the majority of costumed good guys who followed in the wake of Superman and Batman, the Skyman had a long and successful career. Besides appearing in one hundred and one issues of *Big Shot*, he also showed up in four issues of his own magazine. He held on for a full decade in a field where the average crimefighter went bankrupt in a year or two. His adventures were handsomely drawn, for the most part, and, with the possible exception of the unfortunate space opera sequence, brightly written. Skyman never confronted a truly first rate and memorable villain, someone on the level of the Joker, the Penguin or Luthor, and it's possible that a comic book hero is judged not only on his merits but on the calibre of his foes. Whatever the reasons, he failed to capture the hearts and minds of the readers. He did, though, give it a pretty good try.

THE GOLDEN AGE interview

Conducted by Ron Goulart

Best remembered today as the artist who drew the definitive version of Lady Luck, Klaus Nordling was one of the more active cartoonists of the Golden Age. He had features, most of which he wrote as well as drew, in *Wonderworld Comics, Mystery Men Comics, Wings Comics, Flight Comics, Hit Comics, Crack Comics, National Comics, Military Comics, Smash Comics, Speed Comics* and *Mystic Comics*. Possessed of a lively, cartoony style, Nordling turned out adventure strips that had inventive layouts and considerable humor. Besides Lady Luck, he drew Spark Stevens, Greasemonkey Griffin, Bob and Swab, Pen Miller, Wonder Boy, Shot & Shell and the Barker.

He was born in Finland and came to the United States as a child. His parents settled in Brooklyn in an area known then as Fintown. Nordling worked on Alexander King's satiric *Americana* magazine, did a weekly comic strip about Baron Munchausen and got into the comic book field late in the 1930s. Besides cartooning, he's had a life-long interest in acting. He's both directed and acted in many little theatre productions. Still active today, he does commercial comic books, graphics and turns out all the artwork for a very posh video game arcade in Westport, Connecticut. A longtime resident of Connecticut, he lives with his wife in a house surrounded by woodlands. We interviewed him late in January of this year.

KLAUS NORDLING

C:GA: What kind of art training did you have?

KN: Myself, that's all. I started doodling when I was a kid....

C:GA: What was your first contact with the comic book business?

KN: The first job I had involved Iger... let me see... how did I happen to go there? Maybe I saw a newspaper ad for that... Anyway, I went there and Jerry Iger was running this place. He was doing a thing called Shorty Shortcake (in *Wonderworld Comics*), which he asked me to do because he was too busy. A terrible thing. Then around that time Eisner got involved. Then I got a call from them. I believe the first thing I did for them was Lt. Drake (in *Mystery Men Comics*).

***C:GA: And Spark Stevens in* Wonderworld?**

KN: Yeah, Spark Stevens. And Powder Burns (in *Wings Comics*).

C:GA: Up until then you hadn't done straight stuff. Did they suggest you switch?

KN: Well, the straightest thing I did, if you can call it straight, was this Lt. Drake....

C:GA: When you were with Eisner and Iger, did you work in their shop?

KN: No, I never worked in the shop.

C:GA: And did you write your own stuff?

KN: Oh, yes, all the time. Well, almost all the time. Sometimes when I was in a jam, somebody might give me an idea, just a synopsis not a script.

C:GA: So you wrote each feature, drew it and....

KN: Lettering, erasing, everything.

C:GA: And you took it in....

KN: I brought it in and, you know, cheeky kid... little dreaming that they might turn something down. But they never did.

C:GA: Did you have a contract with them?

KN: No.

C:GA: You had no way of knowing, then, if you went in one week that they might not have any more work for you?

KN: That's right. That's the way it eventually happened, when Arnold took me off the Lady Luck comic book. I just walked in and Busy Arnold said, "Well, we don't need you anymore."

C:GA: How did you get together with Arnold in the first place?

LADY LUCK
WHO IS THIS MYSTERIOUS, DARING, AND ELUSIVE LADY LUCK WHO CONFOUNDS THE UNDERWORLD ... AND LEAVES THE POLICE BAFFLED AS TO HER TRUE IDENTITY!!
BY
K.L. NORDLING

KN: That was through Will... I was doing Pen Miller and Bob & Swab in Minnesota and sending it in. For about a year. And in the middle of the winter I got this hurry up telegram from Will to hurry back to New York. They were in a jam with Lady Luck. So I dashed off in the middle of winter, left my wife and kids in Minnesota, to come and take over Lady Luck. There for awhile I had no place to really operate, so I worked in the Tudor City shop.

C:GA: Now when you started doing Lady Luck, did Eisner give you any guide lines?

KN: No, he just showed me a couple of strips from before. That's all. I just studied them and mulled it around for awhile. And thought, well, this stuff is too straight. Not the drawing, but the writing was too straight. I liked to have a little comedy in there... so I just suggested what I'd like to do with it to Will. And he said, "Sure, go ahead".

C:GA: You worked with him on the Spirit, too?

KN: Oh, yeah. I wrote quite a few stories. I actually pencilled some. And I even, if I remember rightly, was forced into inking one. But I can't remember much about that. I know one story I wrote was about a hermit who lived in a cave that water flooded over... Several I did in a series set in the Orient. I wrote those and did rough pencils.

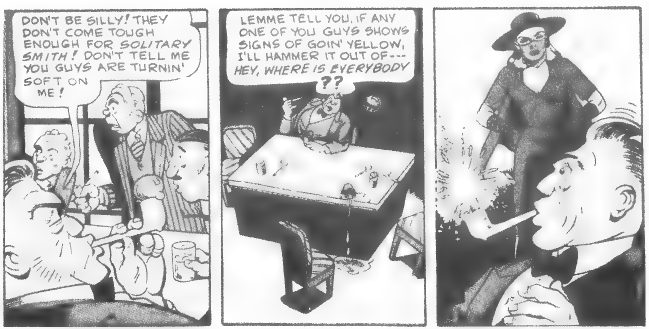
C:GA: There's a point in the Lady Luck episodes in the Spirit weekly where you stop and Fred Schwab takes over. Why was that?

KN: Beats me. Probably because I got myself jammed up with other work.

C:GA: What about the Barker? Did you always write that?

KN: There were a couple of scripts written out. Done by Joe Millard. I changed those some and after that wrote it myself.

C:GA: Let's go back in time for a minute. We missed talking about Crash, Cork and The Baron in Speed Comics. ***Was that for the shop?***


DON'T BE SILLY! THEY DON'T COME TOUGH ENOUGH FOR SOLITARY SMITH! DON'T TELL ME YOU GUYS ARE TURNIN' SOFT ON ME!
LEMME TELL YOU, IF ANY ONE OF YOU GUYS SHOWS SIGNS OF GOIN' YELLOW, I'LL HAMMER IT OUT OF--- HEY, WHERE IS EVERYBODY??

PEN MILLER
TREASON
CRIME
GRAFT
THE TWIST OF A WRIST OR THE FLIP OF A COIN IS ENOUGH TO SEND THE FAMED CARTOONIST, PEN MILLER, DETECTIVE NEMESIS OF THE UNDERWORLD, HEADLONG INTO ANOTHER CRIME-BUSTING VENTURE . . . FOR OUT OF SUCH GRIST DOES HE GRIND HIS CARTOON STORIES.
By King

KN: Will was involved, yes. He wanted an adventure strip and we talked it over. And I said what about three guys....

C:GA: Three flyers.

KN: Three flyers in the old bunch of pals adventure tradition. These things were all very casually thought up, always with Will. Sitting around with our feet on the table, both smoking pipes....

C:GA: Speaking of pipe smoking cartoonists, what about Pen Miller? How autobiographical was that?

KN: I hardly had adventures like that. But, yes, everybody said he looked like me. That idea... golly, I don't remember if I said to Will, "How about a cartoonist detective?" or he did.

C:GA: That one lasted almost as long as....

KN: Lots of people liked that one. Just because it was about a cartoonist. They felt, you know, they were getting the inside stuff.

C:GA: Seems to me that Swab in Bob & Swab is somewhat of a self-caricature?

KN: You think so?

C:GA: Feisty little blond sailor.

KN: I never thought of it that way, but now you mention it... I didn't know that I was that ugly.

C:GA: Pen Miller is the idealized version, Swab the sort of caricature.

KN: Dr. Jeykll and Mr. Hyde.

C:GA: You mentioned earlier that the end of your career in comic books came as somewhat of a surprise. What did you do after that? Did you go over with Eisner?

KN: I did commercial jobs, yes. Fortunately, Eisner had a commercial job already waiting for me. For—let's see—a fertilizer company in Maryland.

C:GA: Did you drop out of comic books altogether at that time?

KN: I did a few writing jobs for Ed Cronin, who was over at....

C:GA: Hillman.

KN: Hillman. I wrote a few scripts for him. One called Buck Benson, a cowboy story. And I wrote something for the Heap, I think.

C:GA: You wrote the Heap?

KN: A couple of yarns.

C:GA: That was in Airboy Comics.

KN: That's right. I also wrote some Airboy scripts. Then Will Eisner's commercial stuff started coming through and that kept me busy.

C:GA: In the past few years there's been a revival of interest in Lady Luck, with two books reprinting quite a bit of your work. When you see that stuff now, what do you feel? What do you think about it?

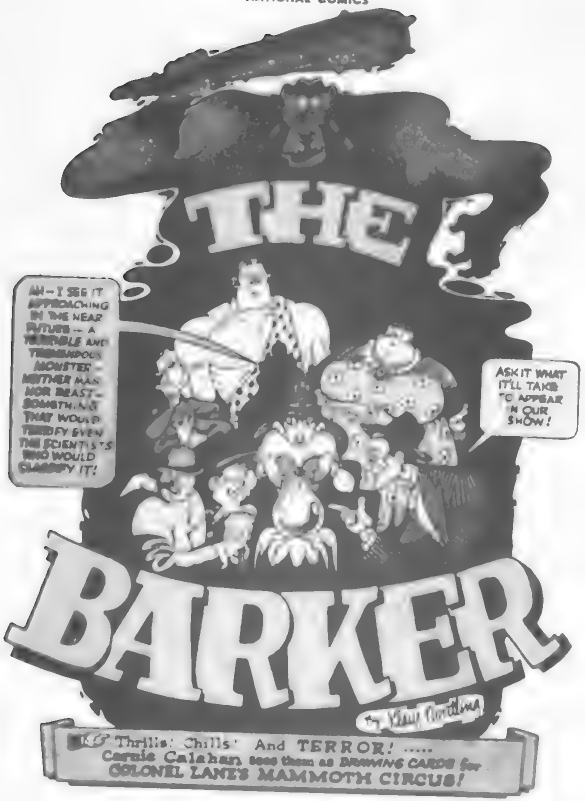
KN: Well, I think I could do it better. No, some of it surprised me. Some of them that I look at, because there's such a distance from them, I almost feel that somebody else did them. And I kind of chuckle at them myself. And later on, just before I quite Lady Luck, I was really beginning to get the style down to where I thought it was something more satisfying than it ever had been.

C:GA: One of the things you did on Lady Luck, possibly under the influence of Eisner, was some very imaginative splash panels. Was that suggested to you by him or did you just pick up on it?

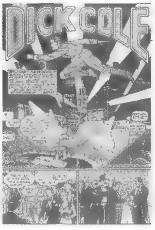
KN: I just picked up on it. I saw others doing it... I saw Will doing it anyway and I figured that's what he wanted.

C:GA: Okay, I believe that ought to tell them what they want to know.

KN: A hell of a lot more than they want to know.


THE
AH—I SEE IT APPROACHING IN THE NEAR FUTURE—A TERRIBLE AND TREMENDOUS MONSTER—NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST—SOMETHING THAT WOULD TERRIFY EVEN THE SCIENTISTS WHO WOULD CLASSIFY IT!
ASK IT WHAT IT'LL TAKE TO APPEAR IN OUR SHOW!
BARKER
by Klaus Nordling
Thrills! Chills! And TERROR! .....
Carnie Calahan sees them as BRANDING CARDS for COLONEL LANE'S MAMMOTH CIRCUS!

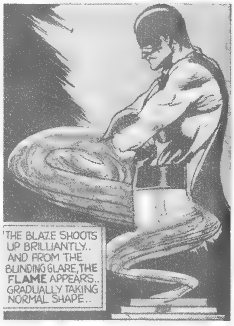
GOLDEN AGE Portfolio

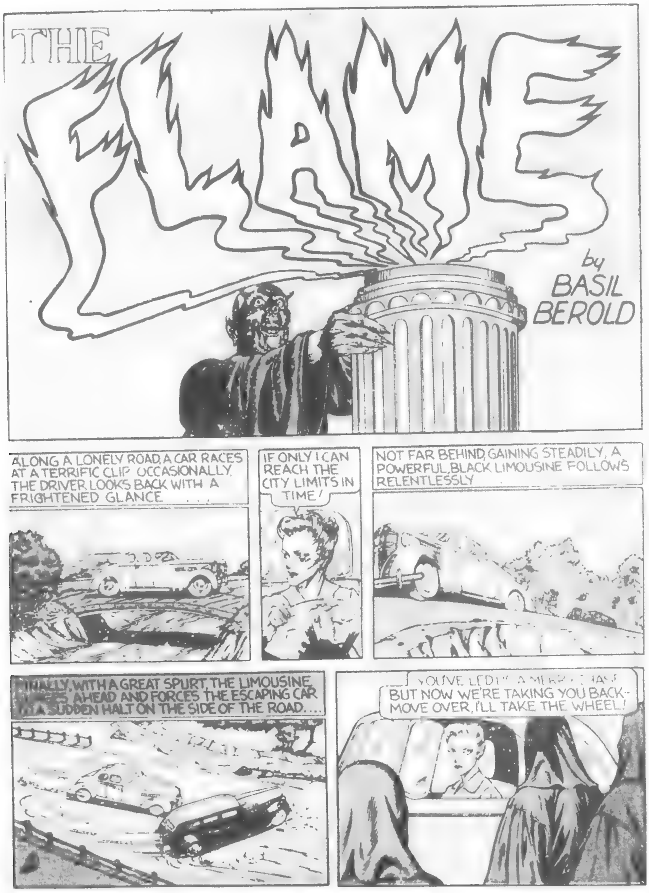


You'll find a fairly eclectic selection herein, which will probably be true in subsequent issues as well. In each portfolio we'll be presenting what we consider interesting and entertaining material from the comic books of forty and more years ago. While our emphasis will be on serious heroics, a few pages of silly stuff will now and then sneak in.

Leading off is an adventure of The Flame. A product of the Eisner-Iger shop, the story appeared originally in Fox's *Wonderworld Comics #4* (August 1939). The handsome artwork is by Lou Fine. Next comes a Dick Cole sequence from the seventh issue of *Blue Bolt Comics* (Dec., 1940). Although Dick was billed as a boy wonder, he wore not a hero costume but a military academy uniform. Bob Davis, who was killed in an auto accident in the early 1940s, wrote and drew the strip. Our third featured hero is Magic Morro, who was a jungle man, a magician and a superhero rolled into one. Drawn in a lively style by Ken Ernst, in the days before he became involved with Mary Worth and her problem-prone friends, Morro was to be found in *Super Comics*. This chapter from his serial-like saga is from #26 (July, 1940).

To fill in the spaces between the heroics we're using some pages done by Fred Schwab. Something of a boy wonder himself, Schwab went to work in the Chesler shop while still in his teens. Our pages are from 1940 issues of *Big Shot Comics*.




THE FLAME
by BASIL BEROLD
ALONG A LONELY ROAD A CAR RACES AT A TERRIFIC CLIP. OCCASIONALLY THE DRIVER LOOKS BACK WITH A FRIGHTENED GLANCE.
IF ONLY I CAN REACH THE CITY LIMITS IN TIME!
NOT FAR BEHIND, GAINING STEADILY, A POWERFUL BLACK LIMOUSINE FOLLOWS RELENTLESSLY
FINALLY, WITH A GREAT SPURT, THE LIMOUSINE SHOOTS AHEAD AND FORCES THE ESCAPING CAR TO A SUDDEN HALT ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...
BUT NOW WE'RE TAKING YOU BACK- MOVE OVER, I'LL TAKE THE WHEEL!

AT THAT MOMENT A STRANGE PLANE CIRCLES OVERHEAD. AT ITS CONTROLS IS THE FLAME WHO INTENTLY WATCHES THE SCENE BELOW.
WHAT'S THIS? A HOODED GANG?
SO THEY'RE TRYING THEIR HANDS AT KIDNAPPING! WELL SEE ABOUT THAT!
LOOK! THAT PLANE ITS HEADED STRAIGHT FOR US ... WE'D BETTER GET AWAY!
THERE AHEAD IS THE HOUSE OF DOXOL THE HEADQUARTERS OF OUR ORGANIZATION. PRESENTLY YOU WILL BE ONE OF US!

MEANWHILE THE FLAME LANDS IN A FIELD CLOSE BY SEPARATED FROM THE DARK BUILDING BY TALL TREES
THE PLANE WILL BE SAFE ENOUGH HERE WHILE I LOOK ABOUT.
THAT WINDOW SEEMS LIKE
MY FLAME GUN CAN CUT THROUGH THESE IRON BARS EASILY TWISTING THEM APART WILL BE SIMPLE
STRANGE THIS PLACE LOOKS DESERTED BY MYSELF THE FLAME HERE
I'LL TRY THIS
UNKNOWN TO THE FLAME, EYES WATCH HIS EVERY MOVE A BONEY HAND REACHES OUT AND PRESSES A BUTTON
THE WALLS! THEY'RE MOVING TOWARD ME! THE SPACE IS BECOMING SMALLER AND SMALLER SOON I'LL BE CRUSHED!!
SUDDENLY WALLS SPRING UP IN FRONT AND BEHIND HIM. THE FLAME IS COMPLETELY IMPRISONED.
WITH A MIGHTY EFFORT THE FLAME TRIES VAINLY TO RESIST AS THE ADVANCING WALLS CLOSE IN RELENTLESSLY.

IN AN ANCIENT [illegible] BEFORE HIS SLAVES NEW MEMBERS ARE TO BE FORCED INTO HIS SERVICE
FOR YOU WHO ARE TO BE INTRODUCED INTO MY SERVICE THIS DAY, LET ME MAKE THIS CLEAR. DURING THE PROCEEDINGS THAT FOLLOW, YOU WILL BE UNHARMED PHYSICALLY
BUT BY THE POWER OF MY MYSTIC FORMULA, I WILL HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER YOUR MINDS. YOU WILL DO AS I BID. ROB, BURN, AND MURDER, IF NEED BE. I SHALL BE YOUR MASTER AND YOU MY SLAVES! YOU MAY THEN RETURN TO YOUR HOMES, BUT YOU WILL ALWAYS OBEY ME, DOXOL, YOUR MASTER!
BRING UP THE MYSTIC SOLUTION AND THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLES!
WITH A [illegible] DOXOL REMOVES HIS MASK, REVEALING A FACE THAT IS HORRIBLE BEYOND DESCRIPTION...
I HAVE THE CEREMONY BEGIN
YOU MY PRETTY ONE FOR ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE SHALL BE THE FIRST
NO NO!
[illegible] CARRIED [illegible] CHAIR
NOW START THE CEREMONIAL FIRE. I AM IMPATIENT TO START!

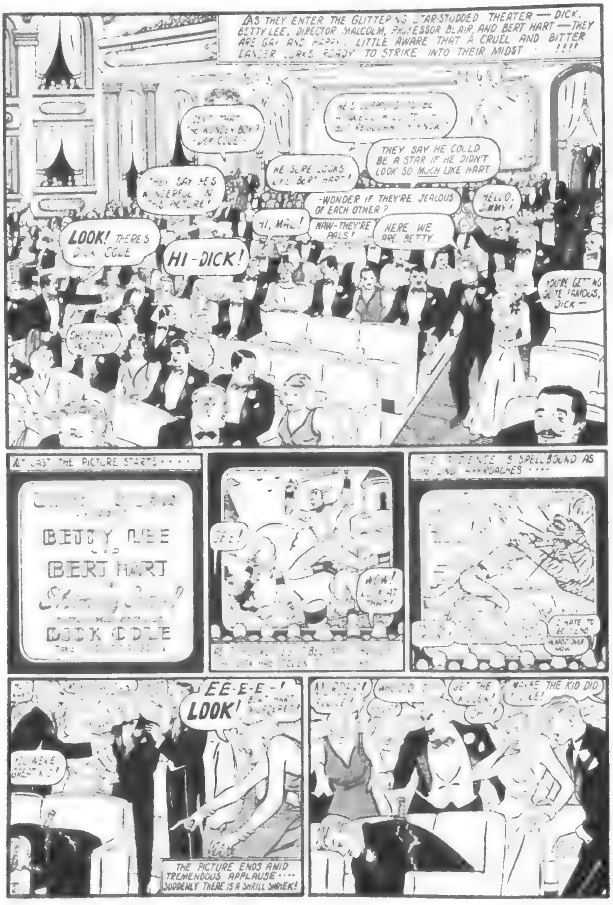
THE HALL BECOMES DEATHLY STILL EXCEPT FOR THE UNEARTHLY CHANT OF DOXOL. JUST THEN THE FIRE BEGINS TO WAVER IN AN UNNATURAL MANNER.
THE FIRE IS DIMMING! WHAT HOW
THE BLAZE SHOOTS UP BRILLIANTLY.. AND FROM THE BLINDING GLARE, THE FLAME APPEARS.. GRADUALLY TAKING NORMAL SHAPE.
SEIZE HIM, MEN. KEEP AWAY FROM ME.
THE FLAME EASILY WITHSTANDS THE ONSLAUGHT. DOXOL SEIZES THE OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE. HE STEPS BEHIND A SLIDING PANEL..
HE RAPIDLY DESCENDS TO AN UNDERGROUND HANGAR WHERE A FAST PLANE RESTS IN A CATAPULT READY FOR INSTANT FLIGHT.

LIKE A ROCKET, DOXOL'S SHIP IS RELEASED FROM ITS HIDDEN HANGAR AND ROARS SKYWARD...
BUT A MOMENT LATER, THE FLAME IS CLOSE ON HIS HEELS. HE SPRINGS TO HIS PLANE
THE POWER OF THE HOODED GANG LIES IN THE LEADERSHIP OF DOXOL WITHOUT HIM, THEY WOULD ONCE AGAIN BE NORMAL HUMANS. I MUST CAPTURE HIM!
AND THE FLAME ROARS IN PURSUIT
AS THE FLAME'S SHIP SWIFTLY CLIMBS, DOXOL ZOOMS ABOUT AND BRINGS HIS MACHINE GUN INTO PLAY
THAT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD, DOXOL. THIS IS THE END FOR YOU!

THE FLAME BRINGS HIS GUN INTO PLAY, SHOOTING A STREAM OF FIRE AT THE HOODED MASTER'S MOTOR. WITH A SICKENING WAIL, DOXOL'S PLANE NOSES TOWARDS THE GROUND AND CRASHES INTO A GREAT BURST OF FLAME.
AS THE FLAME LANDS, A CAR DRIVES UP AND OUT STEPS THE GIRL HE HAD SAVED FROM THE MAD DOXOL'S CLUTCHES.
HOW ARE THE OTHERS, MISS? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE GANG?
WHEN DOXOL DIED HIS EVIL POWER DIED WITH HIM. HIS FORMER SLAVES HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR NORMAL SELVES..
BUT YOU! WHY DID YOU REMAIN?
I WANT TO THANK YOU PERSONALLY FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE FOR ME.. I THINK YOU'RE WONDERFUL!
ER-(GULP) THANK YOU, MISS!
WHY HE'S DISAPPEARED IN A PUFF OF SMOKE, PLANE AND ALL!
AND HIGH OVER HEAD, SPEEDING INTO THE SETTING SUN, ROARS THE FLAME, HEADING TOWARD NEW ADVENTURES.

MORTIMER
the monk
SLIDING DOWN A BANISTER SURE BEATS WALKING DOWN!!
CRASH!
BAM!
-HOLY SMOKE! -I SMASHED A VASE -THE BOSS WILL TAN MY HIDE FOR THIS!! OOO- OOOH! -I CAN ALREADY FEEL THE SPANKING I'LL GET!
AW- MAYBE IF I SLIP A BIT OF GLUE BETWEEN THE PIECES I CAN STICK IT TOGETHER AGAIN!
GLUE
OH WHAT A MESS I MADE OF IT! NOW IT'S JUST A MEANINGLESS SHAPELESS PIECE OF JUNK!!
WOW! HERE COMES THE BOSS HE'LL RIP ME INTO A MILLION PIECES!!
S'LONG WORLD!
WHY MORTIMER! - I DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU HAD AN ARTISTIC SOUL! - THIS MODERNISTIC STATUE YOU BUILT IS A MASTERPIECE!!
?
I'M GONNA PUT IT IN A NATIONAL ART EXHIBIT. THE COUNTRY WILL SOON RAVE ABOUT YOUR OVER-DEVELOPED BRAIN. THEY MIGHT EVEN MAKE YOU THE KING OF BEAT
LATER -
BOY! BY THE TIME I GLUE THIS FURNITURE TOGETHER AGAIN IT'LL BE WORTH A FORTUNE!
I JUST CAN'T WAIT UNTIL THE BOSS SEES IT!!

DICK COLE
WONDER
BOY!
By Bob Davis
CIRCLE THEATER TO ATTEND.... AND NOW, DICK COLE AND HIS PARTY ARE JUST COMING UP.... WATCH!
-AND HERE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, JUST COMING UP THE CARPET, IS THAT WONDER BOY OF AMERICAN YOUTH, WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO THIS GREAT PICTURE... DICK COLE!
WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN GET HIM TO SPEAK A FEW WORDS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! OH- DICK—
HOO-RAY FOR DICK COLE!
WOW!
COME ON, DICK— SAY A FEW WORDS! THIS IS A NATIONAL HOOK UP!
HELLO, FELLERS HOLLYWOOD IS OU


AS THEY ENTER THE GLITTERING STAR-STUDDED THEATER — DICK, BETTY LEE, DIRECTOR MALCOLM, PROFESSOR BEL AIR, AND BERT HART — THEY ARE GAY AND CARE-FREE, LITTLE AWARE THAT A CRUEL AND BITTER FATE IS ABOUT TO STRIKE INTO THEIR MIDST . . . . !!!!
THEY SAY HE COULD BE A STAR IF HE DIDN'T LOOK SO MUCH LIKE HART
HE SURE LOOKS LIKE BERT HART
I WONDER IF THEY'RE JEALOUS OF EACH OTHER?
HELLO, JIMMY!
HI, MAC!
NAW—THEY'RE PALS!
HERE WE GO, BETTY
LOOK! THERE'S DICK COLE
HI-DICK!
YOU'RE GETTING FAMOUS, DICK—
AT LAST THE PICTURE STARTS . . . .
BETTY LEE
AND
BERT HART
DICK COLE
SEE!
WOW! I'M IN THE MOVIES!
THE SILENCE IS SPELL-BOUND AS THE PICTURE UNFOLDS . . . .
I HATE TO SEE YOU GO, BUT I MUST SAY GOOD-BY
EE-E-E-E-!
LOOK!
THE PICTURE ENDS AMID TREMENDOUS APPLAUSE . . . . SUDDENLY THERE IS A SHRILL SHRIEK!
WHERE THE KID DID
GET THE GUN?

HE DID IT! MR HART WAS SITTING RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM, AND HE DID IT SO HE COULD PLAY ALL OF MR HART'S PARTS!
HE MIGHT HAVE AT THAT — JEALOUSY!
COPS! THE REVUE HERE
MAY THAT ABSURD! OF COURSE I DIDN'T DO IT!
MURDER! DICK COLE DID IT - HART WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM!
ONE'S DE! ONE'S DE!
MURDER! JEALOUSY!
IT'S CRAZY! IT'S WILD! ANY WOULD DO SUCH A THING!
COLE DID IT!
IT'S RIDICULOUS! HE DID IT! COLE!
LOOK! THAT KNIFE WAS THROWN FROM ONE OF THE BOXES! SEE HOW FAR IT IS EMBEDDED IN! ONLY A LONG ARM COULD HAVE THROWN A KNIFE SO
COLE WAS NOWHEE NEAR BOXES!
SERGEANT — THIS IS —
I WARN'T THIS GUY —
QUIET! ALL OF YA!
YOU'RE THE WONDER-BOY, AIN'T YOU? YOU COULD HAVE DRIVEN THAT KNIFE IN WITH THAT FORCE! I'M BOOKING YOU FOR MURDER!
LISTEN — YOU —
I WANT TO STAND BY THIS
SERGEANT, THIS KID DIDN'T THE GUY
THIS CRAZY MESS IS GOING TOO FAR — AND I AM CHECKING OUT!
SO MAKE ROOM!
ZOOM!
MEANWHILE, FROM ONE OF THE HIGH BOXES TWO SUSPICIOUS LOOKING CHARACTERS PREPARE TO SLIP OUT OF THE THEATER
COME ON! — YOU TOO, ALLEN! — WHAT THE? — CATCH —
HEH-HEH-! NICE WORK! NOW THAT LITTLE STINKER WILL GET IT! HE WON'T GET AWAY!

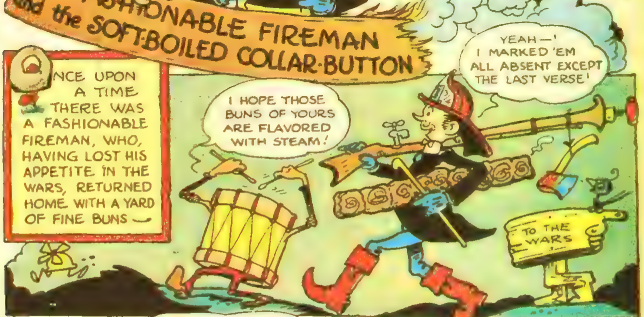
ELUDING THE HUNGRY CLAWS OF THE POLICE, DICK LEAPS UP INTO ONE OF THE BOXES —
EE-OW!
EXCUSE ME, FOLKS —
THEN SWOOPS DOWN ONTO THE STAGE.
GANG-WAY!
HERE HE COMES!
GRAB HIM!
WHAM!
OOPS!
GET HIM!
HOLY CATS - HE IS A WONDER-BOY!
THEY'RE NOT TO BLAME, BE SURE!
AH - A SKYLIGHT!
GAINING THE ROOF, HE LOOKS OVER.
WHEW - WHAT A BLOOD-HOUND!
THERE HE IS!
IN THE ROOF!

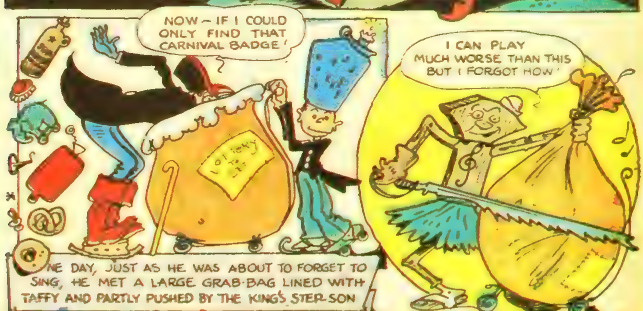
(Continued After Insert)

JINGLE JANGLE TALES

by George Carlson

The FASHIONABLE FIREMAN and the SOFT-BOILED COLLAR-BUTTON


NCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A FASHIONABLE FIREMAN, WHO, HAVING LOST HIS APPETITE IN THE WARS, RETURNED HOME WITH A YARD OF FINE BUNS —
I HOPE THOSE BUNS OF YOURS ARE FLAVORED WITH STEAM!
YEAH — I MARKED 'EM ALL ABSENT EXCEPT THE LAST VERSE!
TO THE WARS


NOW — IF I COULD ONLY FIND THAT CARNIVAL BADGE!
I CAN PLAY MUCH WORSE THAN THIS BUT I FORGOT HOW!
NE DAY, JUST AS HE WAS ABOUT TO FORGET TO SING, HE MET A LARGE GRAB-BAG LINED WITH TAFFY AND PARTLY PUSHED BY THE KING'S STEP-SON
LL OF WHICH WAS VERY FINE, BUT HE WANTED HIS MISSING CARNIVAL BADGE, SO A VERY WOODEN ALLEGRO OBLIGED HIM WITH THE RIGHT KEY, BUT IT WAS OF NO HELP—

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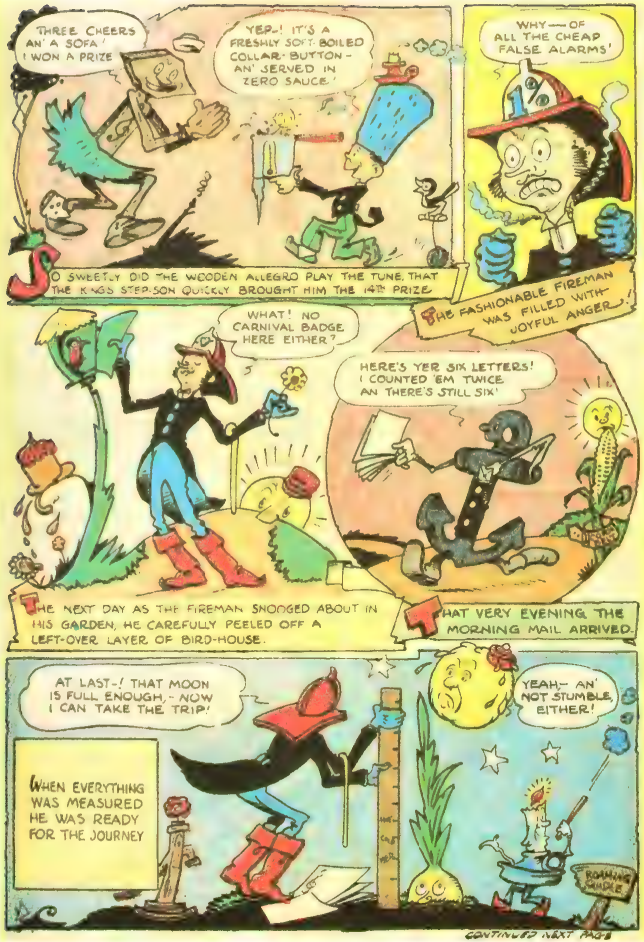
THREE CHEERS AN' A SOFA! I WON A PRIZE
YEP-! IT'S A FRESHLY SOFT-BOILED COLLAR-BUTTON - AN' SERVED IN ZERO SAUCE!
WHY — OF ALL THE CHEAP FALSE ALARMS!
SO SWEETLY DID THE WOODEN ALLEGRO PLAY THE TUNE THAT THE KING'S STEP-SON QUICKLY BROUGHT HIM THE 14TH PRIZE.
THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN WAS FILLED WITH JOYFUL ANGER!
WHAT! NO CARNIVAL BADGE HERE EITHER?
HERE'S YER SIX LETTERS! I COUNTED 'EM TWICE AN THERE'S STILL SIX!
THE NEXT DAY AS THE FIREMAN SNOOGED ABOUT IN HIS GARDEN, HE CAREFULLY PEELED OFF A LEFT-OVER LAYER OF BIRD-HOUSE.
THAT VERY EVENING THE MORNING MAIL ARRIVED.
AT LAST-! THAT MOON IS FULL ENOUGH,- NOW I CAN TAKE THE TRIP!
YEAH,- AN' NOT STUMBLE, EITHER!
WHEN EVERYTHING WAS MEASURED HE WAS READY FOR THE JOURNEY
ROAMING JUNGLE

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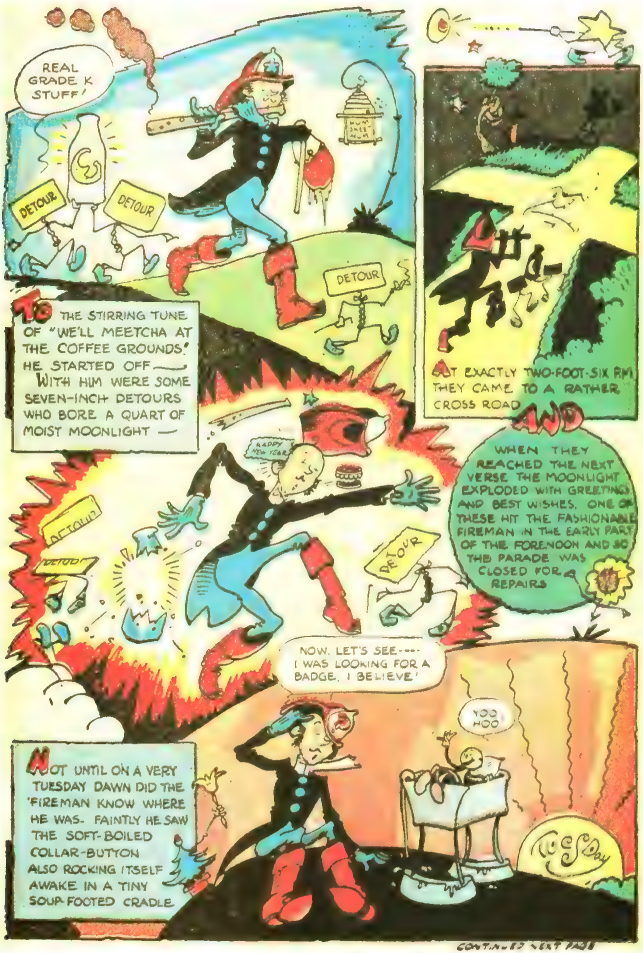
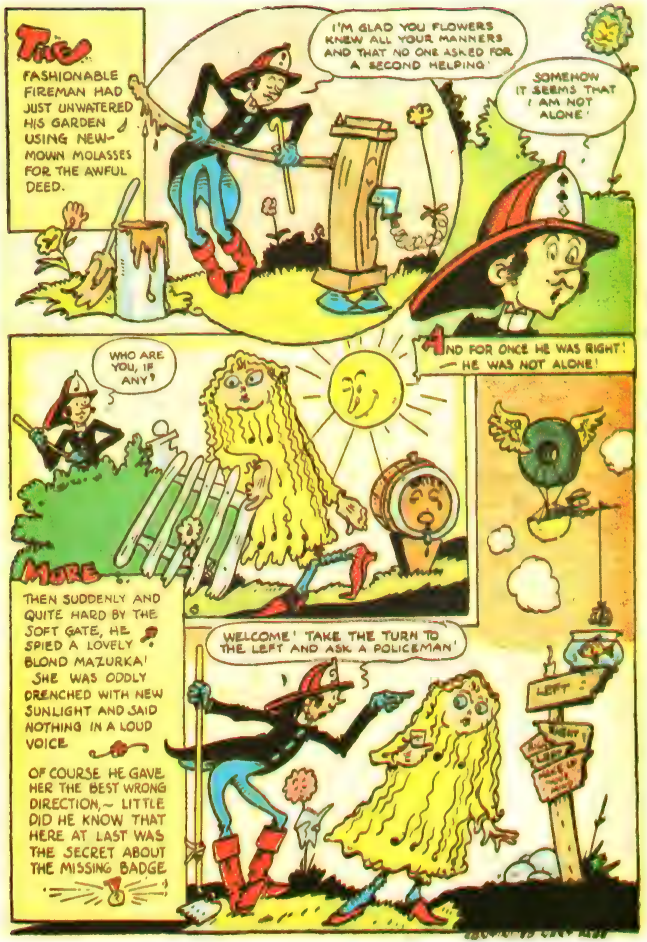
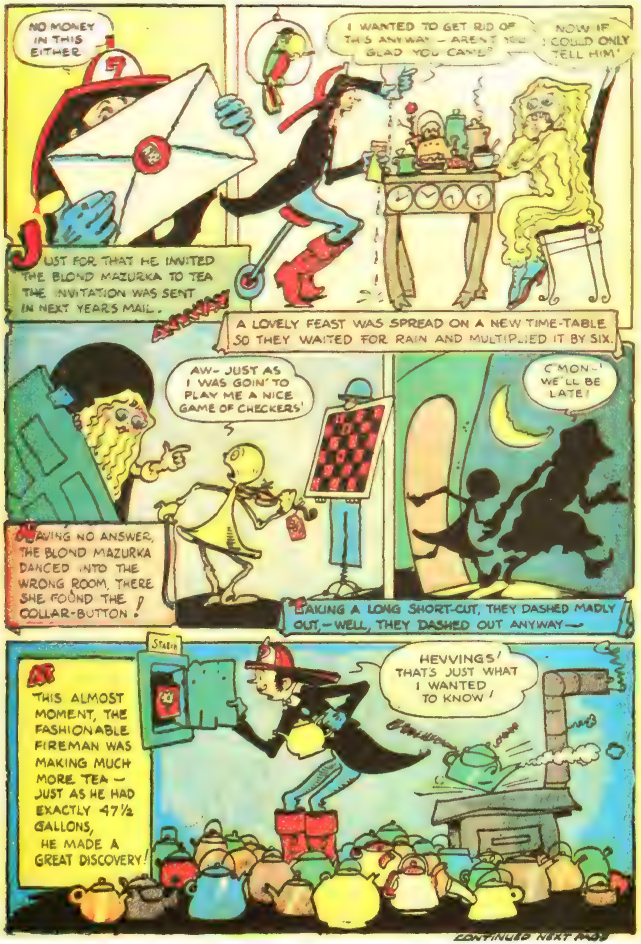

REAL GRADE K STUFF!
DETOUR
DETOUR
DETOUR
TO THE STIRRING TUNE OF "WE'LL MEETCHA AT THE COFFEE GROUNDS" HE STARTED OFF — WITH HIM WERE SOME SEVEN-INCH DETOURS WHO BORE A QUART OF MOIST MOONLIGHT —
AT EXACTLY TWO-FOOT-SIX P.M. THEY CAME TO A RATHER CROSS ROAD AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
DETOUR
DETOUR
DETOUR
WHEN THEY REACHED THE NEXT VERSE THE MOONLIGHT EXPLODED WITH GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES, ONE OF THESE HIT THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN IN THE EARLY PART OF THE FORENOON AND SO THE PARADE WAS CLOSED FOR A REPAIRS
NOW, LET'S SEE.... I WAS LOOKING FOR A BADGE, I BELIEVE'
YOO HOO
NOT UNTIL ON A VERY TUESDAY DAWN DID THE 'FIREMAN KNOW WHERE HE WAS. FAINTLY HE SAW THE SOFT-BOILED COLLAR-BUTTON ALSO ROCKING ITSELF AWAKE IN A TINY SOUP-FOOTED CRADLE.
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

BOY! THAT'S GROWIN' ALL RIGHT— BUT IS IT?
BINGO
1999
1987
1944
1940
1933
1918
1776
THE
LITTLE COLLAR-BUTTON GREW AND GREW AND WAITED UNTIL HE WAS NOT OLD ENOUGH
NO! NO! NO! LIKE DISS— A-000!
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MUSIC EITHER.'
THEN
HE WENT AND TOOK WIDE WARBLING LESSONS FROM A TOOTHLESS TUTOR WITH A PEACH-COLORED BIRTHDAY.
AM I GLAD I WENT INTO THE SNOWBALL BUSINESS!
MEANTIME THE WOODEN ALLEGRO DECIDED TO LET HIS STOVE POLISH WHENEVER IT WANTED TO AND
FER ME?
YAS! NO ONE ELSE BUT!
WHEN ONE SHAKY THURSDAY HE RECEIVED A LARGE PACKAGE OF FRESH SPRING AIR . . .
BY THE PACKAGE WAS A GRAND IDEA, SO HE CAREFULLY LOOKED UP THE MOONLIGHT — AND
— HIM AN' HIS OLD BADGE! THIS OUGHT TO WORRY HIM!
HEREUPON HE WROTE A LONG LETTER TO THE FIREMAN SENDING HIS VERY BEST HATE AND SIGNING IT IN ICE-COLD BUTTERMILK.


THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN HAD JUST UNWATERED HIS GARDEN USING NEW-MOWN MOLASSES FOR THE AWFUL DEED.
I'M GLAD YOU FLOWERS KNEW ALL YOUR MANNERS AND THAT NO ONE ASKED FOR A SECOND HELPING!
SOMEHOW IT SEEMS THAT I AM NOT ALONE!
AND FOR ONCE HE WAS RIGHT! — HE WAS NOT ALONE!
WHO ARE YOU, IF ANY?
MORE
THEN SUDDENLY AND QUITE HARD BY THE SOFT GATE, HE SPIED A LOVELY BLOND MAZURKA! SHE WAS ODDLY DRENCHED WITH NEW SUNLIGHT AND SAID NOTHING IN A LOUD VOICE.
OF COURSE HE GAVE HER THE BEST WRONG DIRECTION,— LITTLE DID HE KNOW THAT HERE AT LAST WAS THE SECRET ABOUT THE MISSING BADGE
WELCOME! TAKE THE TURN TO THE LEFT AND ASK A POLICEMAN!
LEFT
RIGHT
LEFT
MAKE UP YOUR MIND


NO MONEY IN THIS EITHER —
I WANTED TO GET RID OF THIS ANYWAY — AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU CAME?
NOW IF I COULD ONLY TELL HIM!
JUST FOR THAT HE INVITED THE BLOND MAZURKA TO TEA THE INVITATION WAS SENT IN NEXT YEAR'S MAIL.
ANYWAY
A LOVELY FEAST WAS SPREAD ON A NEW TIME-TABLE SO THEY WAITED FOR RAIN AND MULTIPLIED IT BY SIX.
AW— JUST AS I WAS GOIN' TO PLAY ME A NICE GAME OF CHECKERS'
C'MON— WE'LL BE LATE!
HAVING NO ANSWER, THE BLOND MAZURKA DANCED INTO THE WRONG ROOM. THERE SHE FOUND THE COLLAR-BUTTON!
TAKING A LONG SHORT-CUT, THEY DASHED MADLY OUT,— WELL, THEY DASHED OUT ANYWAY—
AT THIS ALMOST MOMENT, THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN WAS MAKING MUCH MORE TEA — JUST AS HE HAD EXACTLY 47½ GALLONS, HE MADE A GREAT DISCOVERY!
Stairs
HEVVINGS! THAT'S JUST WHAT I WANTED TO KNOW!
CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

I'LL SEE NOW IF I CAN GET THAT MAZURKA TO TALK!
OUT!
SPEEDING MERRILY OUT HE ADDED IT ALL GENTLY UP IN TOPS AND MARBLES.
YAH HEO!
VERY PRETTY-! NOW LEMME HEAR YOUR SEWING LESSON
THERE IN HIS FRONT BACK-YARD HE FOUND THE BLOND MAZURKA THREADING SOAP BUBBLES WHILE THE SOFT-BOILED COLLAR-BUTTON SANG ALMOST SWEETLY.
THE BLOND MAZURKA SAW HIM! IN A SLOW HURRY SHE TORE OFF THE SUN-DRENCHED WIG AND THERE BEFORE THE FIREMAN COULD SAY "ROCK JABINSON," — STOOD THE WOODEN ALLEGRO!
AHA! BIG BOY-! I PULLED A FAST ONE ON YUH THEN!
YOU THOUGHT I WANTED TO KIDNAP HIM — WELL, I DIDN'T! HE JUST NOW SLIPPED ME YOUR CARNIVAL BADGE!
WHAT!
AND SO THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN LEARNED THE GLAD BUT AWFUL TRUTH —
CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

YOU REALLY MEAN IT THEN
SURE! HE GOT IT FREE WITH HIS GARGLE LESSON AND IT'S A NICE GRADE A CREAM COLOR
AW. SKIP IT'
SIX MORE OR LESS WEEKS PASSED THIS CAME ON A MONDAY SO THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN BEGAN TO WEAR HIS BADGE UNTIL THE CREAM COLOR TURNED TO GRADE B THEN HE INVITED THE WOODEN ALLEGRO TO TEA, THIS TIME WITHOUT STARCH.
I STILL WANT TO GET RID OF THIS AND I AM STILL GLAD YOU CAME!
EXIT
(MEANING MORE SHMALTZ!)
THE SOFT-BOILED COLLAR-BUTTON FINALLY GOT BACK TO HIS UNCLE IN CHINA, FROM WHOM HE STILL TAKES WARBLING LESSONS IN THE KEY OF Q AND NOT SO SOUR.
1 & ONLY
BUT THE FASHIONABLE FIREMAN NEVER HEARD FROM HIM AGAIN — SO, TO THIS DAY HE WEARS HIS CREAM-COLORED CARNIVAL BADGE TO ALL THE FASHIONABLE FIRES.
DAISIES WON'T TELL
THE END

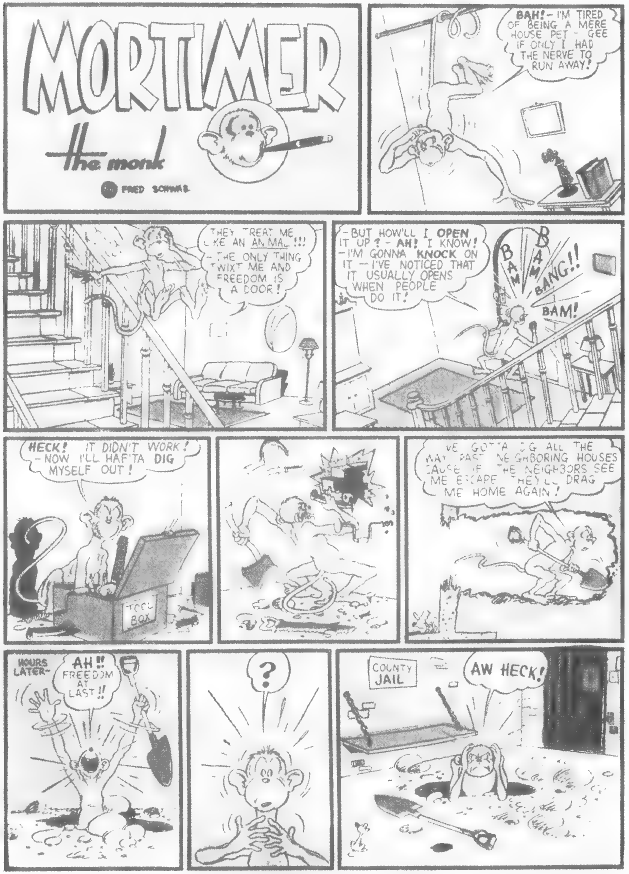
HE POSES FOR A SECOND, THEN MAKES A QUICK, HAIR-RAISING DIVE DOWN INTO A PALM TREE...
WOW!
HERE HE COMES!
HEY!
POLICE!
ONCE IN THE CLEAR, DICK BREAKS INTO A SUPER BURST OF SPEED!
PANG!
PANG!
ONE MINUTE GLORY— THE NEXT, A CRY FOR BLOOD! ... I'LL BE GLAD TO GET BACK TO OLD FARR!
POOR DAD... HE'LL BE WORRIED STIFF!
LATER.
COLD, WET, HUNTED LIKE A CRIMINAL, DICK SNEAKS BACK INTO THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
SUDDENLY A SMALL, SHRILL VOICE AT THE END OF THE STREET ATTRACTS HIS ATTENTION.
THIS SHOULD BE INTERESTING!
LET ME HAVE ONE OF THOSE PAPERS, PAL.
EXTRA!
EXTRA!

Star EXTRA
DARING BREAK AT PRISON
STATION -
THANKS, MR MALCOLM. I'LL TRY IT. AND TELL DAD NOT TO WORRY.... WE'LL STRAIGHTEN THINGS OUT YET!
HELP!
A RUN — A
BANG!
THE LIGHT WIRES
THEN USING THE WIRES AS A TRAPEZE, HE SWINGS UP TO A ROOF!

BOY — THAT WAS CLOSE!
AH — HERE IT IS — LOMA APARTMENTS!
NOW LET'S SEE — MISS MAY DOYLE — SUITE 55 —
FLOOR, AND SHE'S IN. A LIGHT ····· NO FIRE-ESCAPE —
AH — THERE HE IS — THE SNAKE! I WONDER IF THAT SECOND WINDOW DOWN IS OPEN?
SO WE HIRED A BOX AT THE THEATER —
AND HOT DOG, LOOK AT THIS!
WE GOT THERE EARLY AND FOUND OUT WHERE COLE AND HIS GANG WOULD SIT BELOW US ON THE FLOOR —
YOU SURE HAD YOUR NERVE, PHIL!

FINDING A NEW RE TO RECORD CARPS
RANGE BEFORE TI JOAN AND HE DID NT DOWN
AND SOLED NT, EH?
LEES
BOY—S THIS HOT!
HEY!
LE EE LE!
SLAM!
YOU WILL— IN A PIG'S
SOCK!
LITTLE SQUIRT—! WE'LL FINISH YOU THIS TIME—FOR GOOD!

OOPS-!
CRASH! WE GO—RIGHT!
AND OFF TO SLEEP!
SOCK!
ONE HOUR LATER, DICK ENTERS THE DOWNTOWN POLICE HEADQUARTERS, HIS PRISONERS IN TOW —
DICK COLE REPORTING, LIEUTENANT.... HERE ARE THE TWO MURDERERS OF BERT HART, AND RECORDS OF THEIR CONFESSION!
LOOK-!
DICK!
AND PHIL, TOO—!
AND SO DICK'S HOLLYWOOD EXPERIENCES COME TO A CLOSE.... THE NEXT MORNING FINDS HIM WITH PROFESSOR
FOR THE EAST, AND FARR ACADEMY. THE GANG ARE ALL HERE TO SEE THEM OFF
HIS HOLLYWOOD ADVENTURES AT AN END, DICK COLE RETURNS TO FARR MILITARY ACADEMY, IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF—
BLUE BOLT COMICS.


MORTIMER
the monk
FRED SCHWAB
BAH! - I'M TIRED OF BEING A MERE HOUSE PET - SEE IF ONLY I HAD THE NERVE TO RUN AWAY!
HEY, TREAT ME LIKE AN ANIMAL !!! THE ONLY THING 'WIX' ME AND FREEDOM IS A DOOR!
BUT HOW'LL I OPEN IT UP ? - AH! I KNOW! - I'M GONNA KNOCK ON IT - I'VE NOTICED THAT IT USUALLY OPENS WHEN PEOPLE DO IT!
BAM BAM BANG!! BAM!
HECK! IT DIDN'T WORK! - NOW I'LL HAFTA DIG MYSELF OUT!
TOOL BOX
I'VE GOTTA JUMP ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE NEIGHBORING HOUSES BEFORE THE NEIGHBORS SEE ME ESCAPE - HEY L. DRAG ME HOME AGAIN!
HOURS LATER-
AH!! FREEDOM AT LAST!!
?
COUNTY JAIL
AW HECK!

MAGIC MORRO
COPR. 1943 BY R. S. ALL
Ken ERNST
MAGIC MORRO RESCUES SAM GOODWIN AND HIS DAUGHTER MARY FROM AN EARTHQUAKE AND STORM WHICH HAVE SHAKEN THE ISLE OF UTANGO... AND RETURNS THEM TO GOODWIN'S BOAT, THE MARY G., WHICH HAS STUCK FAST AGAINST A REEF!
MORRO! WHAT HAPPENED?
GOODWIN WAS CAUGHT UNDER A FALLING TREE! LEAD ME TO HIS CABIN - HE'LL REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION!
IS HE... ALL RIGHT?
JUST A BROKEN ARM / I'LL HAVE IT SET IN A MINUTE /
MASTER NOT TELL ALL HE FIND / MASSA GOODWIN WOUNDEDLY SERIOUS /
I WANT TO SPARE MARY UNTIL I'M CERTAIN JUST HOW SERIOUS!
BUT MARY SENSES SOMETHING AMISS /
YOU'RE KEEPING SOMETHING FROM ME, MORRO! I MUST KNOW THE TRUTH! FATHER IS ALL I HAVE LEFT /
YOUR FATHER'S LIFE DEPENDS ON WHETHER OR NOT THE STORM HAS WASHED AWAY THE GARDEN OF MEDICINE /
BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND?
FOR CENTURIES THE GODS OF UTANGO HAVE GROWN AND CULTIVATED HERBS WITH MIRACULOUS HEALING POWERS / THESE HERBS ARE GROWN IN THE GARDEN OF MEDICINE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF UTANGO / I MUST LEAVE FOR THERE AT ONCE /
YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT, MORRO! THE ISLE IS A SHAMBLES, GOODWIN WILL BE DEAD BEFORE YOU RETURN... IF YOU RETURN /
MORRO HAS RACED AGAINST DEATH MANY TIMES! MAY THE BEST MAN WIN /

MAGIC MORRO

MORRO DIVES FEARLESSLY INTO THE RAGING WATERS!
THE ISLE IS BREAKING UP FAST! I'VE GOT TO MAKE EVERY MINUTE COUNT!
MAGIC MORRO QUICKENS HIS PACE AS HE SPOTS A STUMBLING FIGURE IN THE DISTANCE!
TANTA TALU!
FIRE! THE FORESTS ARE AGLAZE!
MORRO... MORRO!
SPEAK UP, MAN! WHAT IS IT?
MORRO... STORM KILL ALL BUT FEW UTANGOS... THEY'VE GONE MAD... BLAME YOU FOR DISASTER... KILL YOU!
BUT THE OLD MAN TOTTERS FORWARD AS THE NATIVES ADVANCE...
MORRO IS INNOCENT! TANTA TALU, BRING STORM TO UTANGO...!
NO! NO! MORRO GUILTY! KILL!
KILL!
AI! THEY COME NOW! RUN!
STAND BACK, FAITHFUL FRIEND! MORRO WILL HANDLE THEM!

MAGIC MORRO

AS TANTA TALU PLEADS A CRAZED NATIVE NOTCHES AN ARROW TU HIS BOW AND TAKES CAREFUL AIM AT MORRO'S HEART...
...AND FIRES! WITH HIS LAST STRENGTH TANTA TALU THROWS HIS AGED BODY FORWARD AND RECEIVES THE ARROW INTENDED FOR MORRO!
TANTA TALU!
FOOLS! YOU'VE KILLED YOUR GOD... AND YOUR FRIEND!
THE UTANGOS, UNNERVED BY THEIR DEED, SUDDENLY TURN AND RUN! BUT AT THAT MOMENT ANOTHER TREMOR SHAKES THE ISLE!
AND THE BATTERED EARTH SWALLOWS THE UTANGOS GREEDILY!
MORRO CLEARS THE YAWNING CREVICE WITH A MIGHTY LEAP!
NOW FOR THE GARDEN OF MEDICINE!
MEANWHILE – BACK AT THE MARY G.!
BARNES! THAT LAST TREMOR FREED THE SHIP! WE CAN LEAVE NOW!
DON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD, MAN! WE'VE GOT TO WAIT FOR MORRO!

MAGIC MORRO

BLAST MORRO! WE'VE GOT OURSELVES TO THINK ABOUT, I'M STARTING THE ENGINES OUT OF MY WAY.
BARNES KNOCKS OUT COTTER WITH A HARD RIGHT TO THE JAW!
SORRY, OLD MAN... BUT WE'RE WAITING!
A LITTLE ROPE WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD QUIETING YOU!
BARNES, YOU LOOK PALE! WHAT'S HAPPENED?
NOTHING, MISS! HOW'S MR. GOODWIN?
HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS!.. IF MORRO WOULD ONLY HURRY...
MORRO IS DOING JUST THAT...
THERE'S THE GARDEN OF MEDICINE!.. AND HECTOR, MY PET LION!
THE GARDEN HAS BEEN TURNED INTO A DRYLAND BY THE FREAK ANTICS OF THE EARTHQUAKE!
I COULD GET OVER AND BACK EASILY ENOUGH BY MYSELF... BUT I CAN'T LEAVE HECTOR MAROONED!..

MAGIC MORRO

MORRO SECURES SOME HEAVY VINES... KNOTS THEM INTO ONE PIECE!
NOW TO TIE ONE END TO A TREE!
WITH A GREAT RUNNING LEAP MORRO CLEARS THE CREVICE
THANK THE GODS! THE HERBS ARE STILL INTACT!
AFTER GATHERING A SUFFICIENT QUANTITY OF HERBS MORRO TIES THE FREE END OF HIS VINE ROPE TO A LARGE BOULDER!
O.K. HECTOR, WE'RE ALL SET FOR OUR GRAND FINALE!
HECTOR SPRINGS TO MORRO'S BACK!
ALLEZ-OOP!
HAND OVER HAND... MORRO CROSSES THE CREVICE!
NON-HABIT FORMING! EH, HECTOR?
NOW, FOLLOW ME... AS YOU'VE NEVER FOLLOWED ME BEFORE!
HOLD TIGHT - AND DON'T STOP TO SCRATCH!

MAGIC MORRO

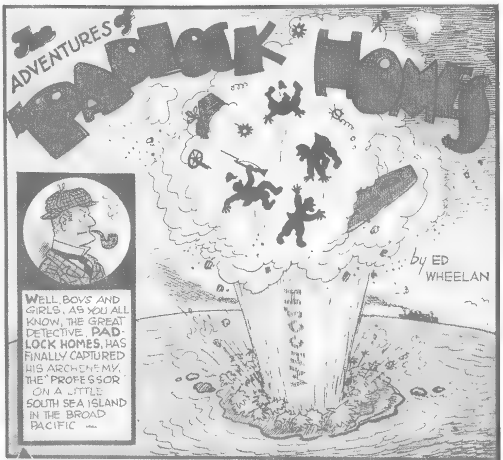
OOM! THERE'S MORRO! HE'S SAFE!
HECTOR TOO! BRING HORN BACK!
BARNES HAS RELEASED COTTER... THINKING HIS ACTION A RESULT OF TEMPORARY HYSTERIA!
I'VE GOT THE HERBS, THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D MAKE IT, MR. MUSCLE!
HECTOR TAKES A DISLIKE TO THE WILY COTTER AND MAKES A PASS AT HIM!
HEY! IS THAT BARNUM AND BAILEY RELIC COMING WITH US?
OF COURSE! HECTOR IS A TRUE FRIEND! PUT HIM IN THE HOLD, OOM!
AFTER MAKING A BREW OF THE HERBS MORRO ADMINISTERS A CUPFUL TO GOODWIN!
HE SHOULD REACT TO THIS IN A VERY SHORT TIME!
MORRO! FATHER'S FEVER IS DOWN AND HE'S SLEEPING PEACEFULLY... I KNOW HE'LL PULL THROUGH! HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU?
DON'T THANK ME, MARY... THANK SUCH MEN AS TANTA TALU AND HIS ANCESTORS — WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN ORDER THAT OTHERS MIGHT LIVE!
I'VE INSTRUCTED THE CREW TO PUT FULL STEAM AHEAD, MISS GOODWIN! WHAT'S OUR DESTINATION?
I DON'T KNOW, BARNES! JUST SAY... DESTINATION... UNKNOWN!
DESTINATION UNKNOWN!
WHAT NEW THRILLS AWAIT MAGIC MORRO AND HIS FRIENDS? BE SURE TO FOLLOW THIS EXCITING STORY IN NEXT MONTH'S SUPER COMICS!

Although some people tend to think of the Golden Age as a time when superheroes and nothing else were to be found in comic books, this wasn't the case at all. There was a great variety of stuff available and even the magazines that were jammed with a half dozen crimefighters always managed to make room for comedy relief. In our Funnymen *section we'll be paying attention each issue to the cartoonists who didn't march to the dominant drummer of the Thirties and Forties, fellows who took the words* comic books *and* funny books *literally.*

ED WHEELAN

Ed Wheelan worked in comic books from the late 1930s through the early 1950s. Irreverent when it came to the more serious conventions of popular culture, he spent those years kidding movies, radio and even the very supermen who helped pay his salary. He also found time to concoct a highly entertaining burlesque of Sherlock Holmes, purvey hundreds of the most bewhiskered old vaudeville jokes and, singlehanded, produce one of the earliest EC titles. And all this, Wheelen felt certain, was after his real career had ended.

Edgar Stow Wheelan was born in 1888 and by the time World War I started he was well established as a newspaper cartoonist. He'd been doing editorial cartoons and filler art on the San Francisco *Examiner* when William Randolph Hearst summoned him East to work on the New York *American*. While with the Hearst paper Wheelan began to do a strip which ran across the top of the sports page, "it had no name but burlesqued various films and stars of the silent era." This became *Midget Movies* and when Wheelan left Hearst in the early 1920s and signed up with the George Mathew Adams syndicate he took the strip with him. With its title changed to *Minute Movies* it became one of the most successful newspaper features of the 1920s.


The ADVENTURES of PADLOCK HOMES
by ED WHEELAN
WELL, BOYS AND GIRLS, AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE GREAT DETECTIVE, PADLOCK HOMES, HAS FINALLY CAPTURED HIS ARCHENEMY, THE "PROFESSOR" ON A LITTLE SOUTH SEA ISLAND IN THE BROAD PACIFIC ...

Gradually Wheelan introduced a regular cast of characters. The first was Dick Dare, a pretty boy in the Hair-breadth Harry mode. The epics, usually running a week, were always directed by Art Hokum. Wheelan once explained the sources of his characters this way, "Mary Pickford, when she wore long curls, was the one Hazel Dearie was patterned after, although at the time there was Grace Darling, Arline Pretty, Hazel Dawn, Louise Lovely, Bessie Love and points west. Dick Dare was a combination of Fran-

FAT and SLAT
WHERE AM I?
IN THE OPERATING ROOM, BUT DON'T WORRY SIR, EVERYTHING WENT OFF NICELY!
THAT'S RIGHT, SLAT! YOUR PAL CAME THRU IN FINE SHAPE! HE'LL SOON BE BETTER THAN EVER!
OH JOY! I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW RELIEVED I AM TO HEAR THAT!
WELL, AS LONG AS HE'S OKAY, I CAN START KIDDING HIM AGAIN!
THE EFFECTS OF THE ETHER WILL SOON WEAR OFF. PUT HIM IN HIS ROOM, JOE!
OH, LOOK!! THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET IS ON FIRE!
HOOK GUY
GREAT HEAVENS NURSE, WE MUST PULL THIS SHADE DOWN AT ONCE!
A MOMENT LATER
A MOMENT AM
YOU'RE IN THE HOSPITAL OLD BOY, YOU'VE JUST BEEN OPERATED!
B-BUT WHY IS EVERYTHING SO DARK?
THERE'S A BIG FIRE ACROSS THE STREET, SO YOUR FRIEND, SLAT INSISTED ON HAVING THE SHADE
WHY?
BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO COME OUT OF THE ETHER SEE THE FLAMES AND RUIN YOUR OPERATION HAD BEEN FATAL!!

cis X. Bushman and Wallace Reid, both blonds. Ralph McSneer was quite a composite of Lew Cody, Stuart Holmes, Lon Chaney, etc." Among the other regulars were Blanche Rouge, Paul Vogue, Lotta Talent, Will Power, Fuller Phun and Archibald Clubb. In the Wheelan Pictures, Ink. movies Dick Dare was inevitably the hero, appearing as Hal Fracas, Robert Rich, Bob Manley, Basil Spongecake, Emery Stone, etc. Hazel was always the heroine, starring in such vehicles as *The Hazards of Hazel*, wherein she portrayed Hazel Knutt, "the cleverest lady-detective in all the East." Ralph McSneer, as might be expected, was rarely a good guy and showed up in such roles as Cyril Sinister, Sherwood Skamp, James Hound, Li Low, Sam Malice and the Spider.

Using the motion pictures of the day as a taking off point, Wheelan put his cast through every kind of format. Cowboy continuities, airplane adventures, soldier of fortune yarns, detective stories, comedies. He also kidded newsreels, travelogues and just about everything else you were likely to encounter in a movie palace. There was an occasional gossip column about his stars and an Answer Man section, which ran about twice each month, that responded to those with questions about the strip and those seeking advice on how to become a cartoonist, and there were a great many of them. As comic strips grew more serious in the Depression years, Wheelan started doing longer stories and also adapting such classics as *Ivanhoe* and *Hamlet*. All his continuities grew straight in the 1930s, putting Wheelan in the position of trying to do seriously the sort of hokum and melodrama he'd once made fun of. The strip folded in the middle 1930s.

One of Wheelan's life-long fascinations was with the circus and his last strip, done in the middle 1930s, was *Big Top*. This didn't succeed and Wheelan, who long held the notion that William Randolph Hearst had a hand in seeing that he didn't thrive, went out of business as a newspaper artist. For quite awhile, though, he kept hoping for a comeback but that never happened. What happened instead was comic books.

The first Wheelan work to appear in comic books was reprints of his *Big Top* newspaper strips. Frank Markey, who'd syndicated it, owned a piece of *Feature Funnies* and this explains why the magazine made use of Wheelan's strip and other Markey flops (such as Rube Goldberg's *Lala Palooza*). *Big Top* was in from the first issue and *Feature* first reprinted Sunday pages and then dailies. It seems likely that this new market for his work inspired the enterprising Wheelan to see what other business he could drum up. He apparently controlled the rights to his *Minute Movies* and in the summer and fall of 1938 the Centaur folks put out two issues of *Little Giant Movie Funnies*. Copy inside these small 6½" by 4½" black and white magazines touted the fact that they were providing a "whole moving picture show for a dime!!!" No mention was made that the contents were reprinted *Minute Movies* newspaper strips.

Next Ed Wheelan got together with young Sheldon Mayer. Mayer, working for M.C. Gaines, was putting together two new magazines, *All-American Comics* and *Movie Comics*. This latter title was one of the oddest comic books ever published in this country and Mayer maintains the whole idea was foisted on him by others. What *Movie Comics* did was take stills and use them to do short

adaptations of current films. The tinted photos were reproduced in muddy fashion and came nowhere near looking like the slick European comic books that used photographs to tell their stories. A bright spot in the magazine's half dozen issues was the six pages that reprinted *Minute Movies* continuities, complete with newsreels, from the early 1930s.

Late in 1939 Gaines launched his third new title, *Flash Comics*, cover dated January, 1940. The magazine was chock full of heroes. In addition to the Flash himself, "fastest man alive," you got the Hawkman, the Whip and Johnny Thunder. Mayer had also hired Ed Wheelan to draw an eight page feature. Wheelan's very first original material for comic books, this was quite a bit like *Minute Movies*. Although there were no iris shots and no continuing cast, *Flash Picture Novels* could otherwise have passed for a funny book adaptation of his old newspaper strip.

To make certain everyone knew who Wheelan was, Mayer lettered in blurbs at the end of the stories, describing him as "the famous creator of 'Minute Movies.' " On the cover of *Flash #4* there was even a box of copy promoting Wheelan.

As he'd done in the strip, Wheelan alternated melodramas, mysteries, comedies and burlesques. He often drew the hero and heroine in a romantic clinch in the final panel. The initial story was a somber two-parter titled "The Demon Dummy" and dealt with a ventriloquist, his nasty lifelike dummy and enough crime, unrequited love and hokum for several silver screen epics. There were fairly straight detective yarns, starring one Inspector Pierce, and detective spoofs. One such teamed strongjawed Nick Duncy and British Inspector Muddleton to solve a mystery involving a honey tycoon. The title of this one was "A Case Of Hives". Wheelan also did a straight Western, a burlesque science fiction space opera and, of course, a circus yarn.

Finally, in *Flash #12* (December, 1940) Wheelan, giving in to "popular demand", brought back *Minute Movies*. Since there'd never been a Sunday page, this was the first time his stock company appeared in color. The initial release was entitled "Manhattan Madman" and starred Dick Dare as a Broadway columnist, Will Power as the police commissioner and Hazel Dearie as a nightclub singer. Ralph McSneer played the title role. At the end of the story Wheelan explained that "next month the 'Minute Movie' company will be away 'on location' " and would reappear in the issue after that. Come #16 he informed his readers that "we have found out lately that many of our audience would prefer to see 'Minute Movies'...in every issue." A ballot was provided in voting on whether the new feature should keep alternating with the novelettes or take over the space altogether. Although the results were never announced, Minute Movie ran every month from #18 on.

Ed Wheelan's
"MINUTE MOVIES"
PRODUCER ED WHEELAN
A CHILLING, THRILLING FILM MYSTERY:
SUPER-GIANT
SUGGESTED BY ART HOKUM
THE HON. HARRISON DYLE
BIG FINANCIER AND INTERNATIONAL BANKER, WAS IN NEW YORK CITY
DORIS, I'M TERRIBLY WORRIED ABOUT YOUR UNCLE'S LONG ABSENCE FROM THE OFFICE. EVEN IF HE IS UNDER DOCTOR'S ORDERS
SO AM I, DEAR.

All in all Ed Wheelan produced forty-three new Minute Movies for *Flash Comics*. As he'd done with the newspaper strip, he alternated melodramas and burlesques. There were productions, all directed by the dependable Art Hokum, about college football, prison life, the circus, the Army. Wheelan ran mysteries, comedies and, once, a musical. Among the films were "Sudden Shock", a Western "in which Dick Dare plays four different roles"; "Cinderella", with Fuller Phun in drag as the Wicked Stepmother; "Murder Mix-Up", wherein the scripts of "Murder In The Mansion" and "Marriage Mix-Up" get scrambled together and filmed as one; "Swoon Song", kidding the Sinatra craze of the early 1940s. One of Wheelan's best efforts was entitled "Intrigue". A takeoff on *The Count Of Monte Cristo*, it featured handsome Dick Dare as Armand L'Amour and McSneer as the

HOMES GIVES GOOD-BYE TO CAPT. ICHABOD JONES —
KEEP THE "PROFESSOR" TIED UP, CAPTAIN, UNTIL THE PROPER AUTHORITIES COME FOR HIM, AND THANKS FOR EVERYTHING!
SOON THE GREAT FLYING BOAT IS HEADED FOR LAVA
BUT AS HOMES NEARS THE TINY VOLCANIC ISLAND — WHICH, IN REALITY, IS ONLY THE RIM OF A SUBMERGED VOLCANO HE SEES A GHASTLY SIGHT —
GREAT HEAVENS, LOOK!!!
THE WHOLE ISLAND IS BEING DESTROYED BY AN ERUPTION !!!
WE... DOCTOR IT LOOKS AS IF NATURE BEAT US TO IT! A JUST RETRIBUTION HAS OVERTAKEN THE "FIENDISH FOUR", AND SO FOR THE TIME BEING, AT ANY RATE, OUR WORK IN THE PACIFIC AREA IS FINISHED !!
RIGHTO
NEW THRILLS AND HIDDEN DANGERS ARE WAITING TO BEET PADLOCK AND DR. WATSIG! WATCH FOR THEIR GREATEST ADVENTURE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF SPEED COMICS!

Duc de la Debris. The introduction says, "Our story opens in Trigue, a small seaport on the southern coast of France."

Along with the movies there were animated cartoons, comedy shorts, the Answer Man and travelogues. In *Flash #36* (December, 1942) Fuller Phun and Archibald Clubb were teamed in a onepager plugging War Bonds and Stamps. This seems to be the very first time they were cast as Fat and Slat, roles that would outlive the feature.

The other major Wheelan achievement of the Forties was "The Adventures of Padlock Homes". Done for the Harvey Brothers, it began in *Champ Comics* in the spring of 1942 and moved over to *Speed Comics* in 1943. More than a burlesque of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's celebrated sleuth, this was also a parody of detective melodramas in general, movie serials and just about anything else that caught Wheelan's fancy. Homes, who came equipped with a deerstalker cap and meerschaum pipe, was aided by Dr. Watzis in his ceaseless struggle to nab the Professor, described as a chap with a "nasty knack for wrong doing." The Professor was aided by a quartet of masked henchmen known as the Fiendish Four.

One of Wheelan's strong suits was always the mock adventure serial and he obviously enjoyed himself turning out the Homes saga, which lasted until the spring of 1945. He was especially deft with the synopses that led off each chapter. "That night Padlock Homes and his American assistant, Nick O'Tyme, entered the Club Fiasco disguised as a couple of other fellows. During the evening the Professor sneezed off his toupee and trick moustache and immediately was recognized by the great detective..." and "The great detective, Padlock Homes, disguised as a large rock, has captured his archenemy, the Professor, but...".

The first complete Fat and Slat comic book was issued in 1944, its full and official title being *Ed Wheelan's Joke Book Featuring Fat and Slat*. In the introduction printed on the inside front cover Wheelan said, "They were originally members of my 'Minute Movies' company which introduced serious continuity and straight drawing to newspaper comic strips many years ago. Some of you may remember their real names, but for the purposes of this book they remain just Fat and Slat." It's interesting to note that in introducing fifty-eight pages of admittedly corny jokes Wheelan was anxious to stress the fact that he was a pioneer of *serious* continuity. Like many a comedian before and since, he may have thought it was better to be a straightman.

The magazine was a compendium of onepagers in which Fuller Phun and Archibald Clubb did their best to perpetrate some of the most venerable and godawful jokes known to man. On each page they changed costumes and locales with frequency, coming across as a mixture of Mutt and Jeff and the Nut Brothers. When M.C. Gaines ended his association with DC to start his EC line, he hired Wheelan to do a Fat and Slat quarterly. This lasted four issues, in 1947 and 1948, and offered more of the same. Wheelan also included an adventure of "Comics" McCormick in each issue. "Comics", who'd first seen the light of day in the short-lived *Terrific Comics* in 1944, was a variation on the better known Supersnipe. Billed as "the World's No. 1 comic book fan", he had a series of daydream exploits in which he rubbed shoulders with mad scientists, meanminded robots and assorted superguys.

Wheelan's last comic book work consisted of fillers and four page stories, mostly drawn for DC. Usually unsigned, they included *Watt the Question Man* and *Foney Fairy Tales*. By the early 1950s he was out of the field. When he died in Florida in 1966, he was working on, appropriately enough, a series of clown paintings.

SECOND BANANA

Second Banana. Not every hero hits it big. Many interesting and exciting characters never really headline their own titles although they may gain devoted followings. This feature will take a look at one of the minor characters that populated the comic books of the 1940s.

Blue Bolt, one of the few 1940s comic book characters who went from being a powerless civilian to being a costumed superhero and then to being a powerless civilian again, first flashed into view in the January, 1940 issue of the magazine that bore his name. Back then, when supermen were multiplying like mosquitoes on a woodland pond, quite a few of them came by their powers and abilities accidently. Plastic Man got acid spilled on him, the Human Bomb swallowed an explosive capsule and Billy Batson wandered into an abandoned subway.

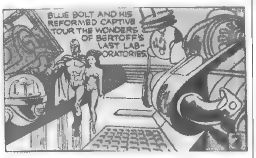
In the initial issue of *Blue Bolt Comics* a Harvard football star named Fred Parrish had a series of accidents that'd permanently disable your average chap. First off Fred is practicing punting with a couple of his school chums "on a secluded mountain estate". All three of them are struck by a bolt of lightning and when the somewhat stupified Fred tries to fly for help in his airplane, he's struck by another bolt of lightning. His plane crashes and while he's still out cold he's carried by a "group of otherworldly looking figures" deep down "into the depths of the Earth". He's deposited in a vast laboratory that any Universal Pictures mad scientist would be proud of and a bearded fellow who refers to himself as "the great Dr. Bertoff" shoots him full of synthetic bolts of lightning. By the time Bertoff christens him Blue Bolt, you feel Fred's certainly more than earned his new name.

The good doctor has more than humanitarian motives for saving Fred's life and converting him into a blueclad hero type. "You shall lead my legions against those of the Green Sorceress," Dr. B explains while the Bolt is still a mite groggy. A sort of emerald-tinted Dagon Lady, the Green Sorceress "is descended from a long line of those who practice the black magic such as the world would never believe possible." She's out to grab this hidden empire's radium deposits and use them to "enslave the world".

For the next several issues Blue Bolt's work is pretty much cut out for him. In a series of impressive, action-packed, zap-filled encounters that rival those of Flash Gordon and a half dozen sf pulp heroes combined, he battles the green-garbed minions of the Sorceress. But destroying the evil lady herself proves to be tougher than he anticipated, particularly since he finds himself developing a crush on her. And she, in unguarded moments, laments, "Oh, why do I love one whom I must destroy that my empire's destiny may

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! BLUE BOLT'S LINES ARE...
SO...
YOU FOOLS!
I AM THE GREEN SORCERESS!
YET RULE THE
AND I SHALL
SUDDENLY BERTOFF SHOUTS A WARN
THE FAMILIAR GRE
MADDENED BY HER MOCKING WORDS, THE ENRAGED BLUE BOLT HURLS HIMSELF INTO THE BLAZING GREEN AURA... DETERMINED TO CAPTURE THE SORCERESS - EVEN IF HE MUST PURSUE HER THROUGH HADES ITSELF!
9

Blue Bolt foils another attempt of the Green Sorceress to rule the world. Despite the fact that they are on opposite sides, the Sorceress and Blue Bolt are drawn to each other. But in the end the world takes precedence over his personal desires and all he asks of the Sorceress is that she give up her plans for conquest.



be fulfilled!" Finally, in Vol. 1, No. 10 of the magazine, the conflict is resolved. Blue Bolt saves the Sorceress' life and she offers to grant him "any wish you desire". Apparently forgetting his onetime fondness for her, he opts for a political favor. He wants her to give up "your quest for world domination". She agrees.

What really made the strip worth following was not its melodramatic mythical kingdom continuities, but the artwork. Blue Bolt was the first feature on which Joe Simon and Jack Kirby worked together. Simon created the character and drew the original adventure solo. Kirby came aboard with the second, pencilling throughout the Green Sorceress saga. Even then Kirby's work was energetic, hyperactive and unlike anything else in comics.

When the team went on to other publishers and higher page rates, Blue Bolt was taken over by George Mandel. A member of the Funnies, Inc. shop, Mandel's style was closer to that being used by such newspaper strip artists as Milton Caniff and Alfred Andriola. The feature became slicker, less flamboyant. During his tenure the Bolt returned topside, took to calling himself the American and picked up a pretty lady super sidekick. She was called by her first name, Lois, and never known as Bolt Girl, the Blue Broad, etc.

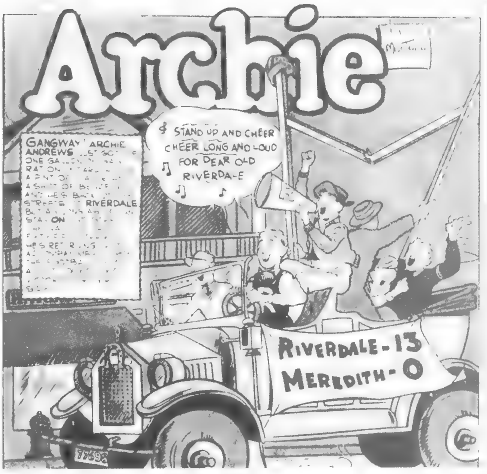
In the fall of 1942, less than a year after the United States entered the War, Blue Bolt was overcome with patriotism declaring, "I'm fed up with this! Me for the Army Air Corps!—Where I can get in a few licks at Mr. Hitler!" For awhile Lois, in civvies, aids him in fighting spies and saboteurs when he's on leave. Fairly soon, though, she vanishes and eventually Fred forgets he ever had a single super power.

Alan Mandel assumed the drawing chores when his brother went into the service. He was somewhat less gifted. Following him came Dan Barry, John Giunta and Tom Gill. After the war, when Blue Bolt was a nonsuper roving adventurer, he was drawn by a fellow signing himself Jack Harmon. Hiding behind the penname was Wayne Boring, who'd had a bit of experience drawing superheroes.

Blue Bolt made his final original appearance in the late 1940s. He came back in reprint form, as his original super self, when Star Publications took over the magazine. He was last seen early in 1951.

LEAVE IT TO

Archie, Buzzy, CANDY, ETC



The gang at Riverdale High has changed considerably since their early appearance. Archie, in particular seems to have been to a good orthodontist since the Forties.

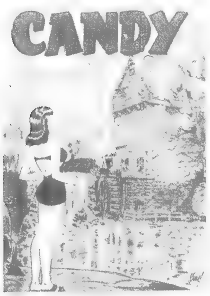
Fairly early in the Forties comic book publishers discovered it was possible to make money with something besides superheroes. Sexy ladies also sold well, they found, as did crooks and gangbusters. Teenagers, too, proved to be highly saleable and in this piece we'll be taking a look at some of the kids who hung out at the newsstands back then.

Adolescents had only recently been discovered to be a separate tribe, a large segment of the population whose antics and rituals could be exploited for entertainment purposes and who had money of their own to spend. College youths had become popular culture stereotypes back in the Twenties, when artists like John Held, Jr. started depicting shortskirted flappers and shieks in raccoon coats. High school kids, though, didn't really get much notice until the Thirties. Swing music and the jitterbug craze helped put them on the map. Whenever you have a group getting attention you also have an older group that looks on with shock, dismay and disapproval and you have a younger group who can't wait to grow up and be just like them. These three groups provided the basic audience, a large one, for teen-based entertainments in the late Thirties and early Forties.

Henry Aldrich, the well-meaning but bumbling teen who was the prime inspiration for most of the early comic book highschoolers, had first appeared in 1938 in Clifford Goldsmith's Broadway play *What A Life*. Henry and his pal Homer jumped next to radio, then into movies. Jackie Cooper was the first screen Henry in 1939 and Jimmy Lydon, a less handsome and more gawky young fellow, took over in the early 1940s. Preoccupied with girls, cars and school, Henry saw no reason why he shouldn't have all the rights and perks of the adult he felt he'd be any day now. But his anxious and elaborate schemes and his frequent dreams of glory lead him into all sorts of unforeseen complications. His parents, of course, rarely understood him. They acted as though he might have contracted some rare disease that had caused him to run amok, at times eyeing him the way Kevin McCarthy looked at the pod people in *Invasion of the Bodysnatchers*.

Among the publishers in the still growing comic book business it was MLJ, producer of *Zip*, *Pep*, *Top-Notch*, etc., who were initially the most influenced by Henry Aldrich and the emergence of the teenager. Commencing in 1941 they began adding teen characters to lineups that previously contained only superheroes, masked marvels and similar violent vigilante types. Their most successful minor was Bob Montana's Archie, who changed the fortunes, and even the name, of the company.

Actually MLJ's very first teenager was a blond, crewcut lad name of Wilbur, who had his coming out in *Zip #18* (September, 1941), a good three months before Archie Andrews' freckled face was seen anywhere. Cooked up by artist Lin Streeter and a



writer named Harvey Willard, Wilbur Wilkin wore a high school letter sweater, bowtie and saddle shoes. He lived in a middle class home, liked to play his "jive records", had a stuffy business man father, a plump mother who didn't quite understand him and a pretty older sister who didn't think much of him. All the standard equipment, in other words, for the star of a teenage comedy strip. Wilbur existed in a milieu that was probably a mite more affluent than that of the average comic book reader and some of his misadventures took place at such leisure class settings as country clubs and golf courses. What he lacked was a strong supporting cast of friends and sweethearts. Even when Bob Montana took over the drawing, Wilbur's rather mechanical situation comedy escapades remained second rate.

Archie himself arrived later in 1941, showing up just about simultaneously in *Pep #22* and *Jackpot #4*. Bob Montana drew this one, too, and his first splash panel in *Pep* showed Archie and Betty barreling along in a red rattletrap of a car. "Hang onto your hats, Riverdale," warned the first caption. "Here comes ARCHIE with his first jumpin' jivin' jallopy! Betty Cooper says everything makes noise but the horn... and right now she's finding out that the roughest distance between two points is a ride with.....ARCHIE!" Archie's plump business man dad was in the story, too, along with his understanding mom. But not Jughead, who made his debut over in *Jackpot*. The darkhaired Veronica came slinking into Archie's life a few issues later. Montana had an attractive, animated style and most of the plots were pure sitcom, with some slapstick thrown in. The Archie version of teen life was one a great many readers took to and his star began to rise. The first issue of his own magazine came out in the fall of 1942 and by late 1947 he'd nudged all the serious heroes out of *Pep* and was its uncontested leading man. When a newspaper strip commenced in the middle 1940s, Montana had abandoned Archie's comic book antics to produce that. Among the cartoonists who took over in the comic books were Harry Sahle and Bill Vigoda.

The Quality Comic Group's most successful teenager showed up in, of all places, *Police Comics* late in 1944. Starting with *#37*, sexy, chestnut-haired Candy was to be found rubbing shoulders with Plastic Man, the Spirit and the Human Bomb. She was the creation of Harry Sahle, who defected from the Archie camp. Although sweet and wholesome, Candy was much more liberated than the girls to be found in Archie, Wilbur, etc. She saw to it that she got her way and was very adept at managing her blond boyfriend, Ted, and her plump business man father. She was much like the energetic young ladies to be heard on such established radio shows as *A Date With Judy* and *Meet Corliss Archer*. There was also a Candy newspaper strip, which began in 1944, and she got a magazine in the summer of 1947. Like all her sisters, Candy was an expert at slang— "But definitely", "I know you're pooched", "All reet", etc. She doted on jitterbug platters, which her parents, of course, loathed.

DC's earliest entry in the teen sweepstakes was also a jive cat, but nowhere near as hep as Candy. Buzzy came along late in 1943, first surfacing in *All Funny Comics*. Not only did he collect phonograph records, he actually played the trumpet. His pretty girlfriend, Susie, adored that facet of Buzzy's personality, but her portly business man father couldn't stand the sound of his music. Just a few toots would inspire him to boot Buzzy from his household and attempt mayhem. This prompted Susie to exclaim frequently, "Popsy is killing Buzzy!" Written and drawn by the admirable George Storm, a veteran of several decades as a successful newspaper cartoonist, the feature had a certain wacky appeal. Buzzy though, wasn't exactly a reasonable facsimile of a 1940s adolescent. He wore a suit and tie, for one thing, and the junky, slogan-covered auto he drove looked like something Harold Teen might've tooled about in back in the funny papers of ten years before. Even so, Buzzy graduated to a magazine of his own. The initual issue showed up on the stands in 1944 and the title lasted until 1958. Storm had abandoned his offspring in the late 1940s.

An even more slapstick teenager was a fellow named Cookie. The diminutive Cookie first surfaced in *Topsy-Turvy Comics*, a one shot that came out in the spring of 1945. Exactly one year later he returned in his own bi-monthly, published by the American Comics Group folks. He had the requisite supporting cast—irascible business man father, understanding mother, beautiful blonde girlfriend named Angelpuss, slangy pal named Jitterbuck, tall and conniving rival named Zoot. What made him different was the fact he was drawn by Dan Gordon. A former animator, Gordon produced a sort of Tex Avery-*Looney Tunes* version of teen life and problems and the stories were full of prattfalls, gags involving outrageous props, lowbrow jokes and a frenzied sort of action.

The teen titles continued to proliferate in the later 1940s. Binkys, Ozzies, Kathys and so on were to be found on just about every major comic book publisher's list. Beyond doubt the most unusual attempt to cash in on the teenage craze was made by ACG in 1947, when they introduced *Hi-Jinx*. "A brand-new idea in comics," the magazine offered the public "teenage animal funnies." Even the invitation to "meet some real hepcats," didn't save this one and, despite contributions by Dan Gordon, it expired after seven issues.

In 1950 Dell even went so far as to try a Henry Aldrich comic book.

WOMEN IN COMICS

SHEENA
QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE
"THE HOT HUM O JUNGLE IS THE BACK-GROUND FOR MANY TREACHEROUS PLOTS. A FANATICAL BUTA WITCH DOCTOR'S MAD BELIEFS ALL MOST BRINGS THE KISS OF DEATH TO THE JUNGLE QUEEN AND HER FRIENDS, UNTIL SHEENA'S COURAGE TURNS THE TIDE.

SHEENA. One of the most formidable females in Golden Age comics, Sheena combined the jungle prowess and knowhow of Tarzan and the sex appeal of Jane. Clad in increasingly skimpy outfits of animal skin, she reigned undisputed as Queen of the Jungle for over a decade and a half. She also turned up on television and before this year is out we should be encountering her in the silver screen.

A product of the Eisner-Iger shop, the blonde Sheena was first seen in 1938. Initially in an overseas tabloid called *Wags*, soon thereafter in a tabsize comic book named *Jumbo* in this country. She shared the magazine with pirates, detectives and funny animals and by the time *Jumbo* shrank down, with issue #9, to regular funny book size she was its star.

Although her monthly adventures bore impressively awesome titles such as "Beasts of the Devil Queen", "Sabre-Tooth Terror", "Land of the Stalking Dead" and "Victims of the Super-Ape", they were standard pulp and B-movie jungle fare. One issue it was cruel slave traders kidnapping Sheena, the next it was Nazi invaders intent on damming up all the streams in her part of the forest. What gave Sheena the edge over Tarzan, Kazar, Ty-Gor and the other jungle dogooders to be found in the comic books of the early 1940s was that she was quite a bit more interesting to look at. Especially to the adolescent schoolboys and horny GIs who made up a large part of her reading public in the World War II years. Not that Sheena was your typical girl next door or just another sparsely dressed pin-up. She was a mighty tough lady, capable of tackling gorillas, crocodiles, lions and even warthogs. Sheena was particularly good with a knife and while dispatching an animal foe she would exclaim things like, "My knife is swifter than your claws, killer!"

Aside from apes, lions and elephants, the regular cast was small. The only other fulltime character was Sheena's gentleman friend, a handsome chap named Bob who wore jodhpurs and had the thankless task of playing second fiddle to the jungle queen. When nothing else entertaining was happening amidst the foliage, Sheena could always whip up an adventure by rescuing the hapless Bob from the latest peril he'd stumbled into.

Sheena starred in all 167 issues of *Jumbo*, as well as in 18 of her own magazine, and went into retirement in the spring of 1958. Among the artists who depicted her titillating adventures with the flora and, often hostile, fauna were Mort Meskin, Bob Powell and Bob Webb. On *Jumbo's* socko covers she was also portrayed by Will Eisner, Dan Zolnerowich and Artie Saaf. The scripts were contributed by a variety of writers, although always attributed to W. Morgan Thomas, a dashing pen-name Eisner had coined.

FORGOTTEN ARTISTS OF THE Golden Age

BUSCEMA

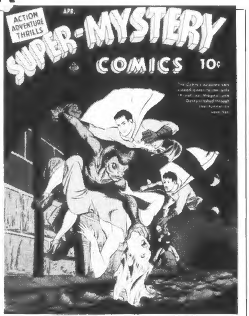
From the middle Thirties to the middle Forties hundreds of artists toiled in the comic book field. A few dozen of them are still active today, a few dozen more are remembered and sometimes written about. The rest remain forgotten, their names unknown and their work seldom seen. Each issue in this section we'll be turning our attention to one of those unsung artists of the past. Resurrecting, briefly, someone whose work brightened the comic books back in the days when the magazines were more eclectic, more open to divergent styles, than they are now.

JOE GALLAGHER

During a career that lasted less than five years, Joe Gallagher drew such leading characters as the Flash, the Spectre and Sandman as well as lesser lights like Wildcat, the Atom, the King, Miss America, Magno and Davey and Red, White and Blue. The most sought after items he was involved with are the issues of *All Star Comics* he worked on from 1942 to 1946. For these he drew the introductions and conclusions, wherein the members of the Justice Society convened, along with several covers and individual character episodes. An interesting and highly individual artist, Gallagher dropped out of comics in the mid 1940s.

He had a proletarian style, one that was somewhat in conflict with the costumed crimefighter sort of stories he was called on to illustrate. It was a native American style, one that was not overly academic and owed nothing to slick magazine illustration or even to what was being done in newspaper comics. Gallagher had worked out a personal, streetwise approach to drawing and was more akin to earlier artists like John Sloan, Reginald Marsh and William Gropper than he was to anyone working in comics. Looking over a batch of his stories you'll notice they are rich with the props and locations of the meaner edge of big city life: ashcans and alleys, street cleaners, pushcarts, junk wagons, tenements and shanties, pool halls, junkyards, Mom and Pop grocery stores, lampposts and fire hydrants. The hydrant was one of Gallagher's trademarks and he seems to have drawn them more often than any other cartoonist of the period, except possibly Will Eisner. He managed to stick at least a couple into just about every six and eight page story he did.

Gallagher didn't take a lyrical approach to drawing adventure material. There's a gritty, cartoony look to his stuff. He had a swift, shorthand approach to action, suggesting more than he showed. He exaggerated and foreshortened his figures, using movie techniques to frame them as they interacted. He favored odd angle shots and long shots, and was also fond of shooting from the ground level up or peering down from above. Although his manner of telling a story is often a bit eccentric, Gallagher got his action to flow from panel to panel and it's evident he designed each page as a totality rather than just an accumulation of boxes. While he was capable of drawing the Atom or Wildcat looking both formidable and graceful, Gallagher's subsidiary characters come off as closer to caricatures of real life types than as figures in an heroic epic. His people are squatty most often, decked out in baggy clothes. Even his villains are rarely elegant.



Joe Gallagher's first comic book work was done in the fall of 1941 for *Military Comics*. In issues #4 and 5 he drew five page adventures of Miss America. This red, white and blue superlady, who was "endowed with the magical powers of the Statue of

ATOM
by
JOE GALLAGHER
TED UDALL
LITTLE AL PRATT, COLLEGE STUDENT WITH HIS MEEK, MILD PERSONALITY AND THAT FIGHTING FORCE—THE ATOM...
WHENEVER THE LONG FINGERS OF PRISM CLOSED IN ON THE VALLEY OF DIAMONDS, THE ATOM FLEW TO THE VALLEY TO PROTECT THE PRECIOUS JEWELS. THE ATOM FINDS HIMSELF STRANGELY HUNGRY FOR—THE HORSE!
AS EVENING SHADOWS FALL... SO DO THE SPIRITS OF AL PRATT!
"BAM" EVERY TIME I CALL ON MARY JAMES, SHE'S OUT... STUDYING FIRST AID AT THE HOSPITAL WITH THAT HANDSOME RED CROSS INSTRUCTOR BRADLEY!
HERE YOU ARE, BUD! NO REASON WHY SOMEBODY SHOULDN'T ENJOY THESE FLOWERS!
AT THAT MOMENT IN THE HOSPITAL...
WOULD YOU PLEASE ADDRESS AND MAIL THIS PACKAGE TO BRADLEY, GENERAL DELIVERY... IN THE NEIGHBORING TOWN OF BRIXTON. MISS JAMES, IT'S A BOX OF CANDY FOR MY MOTHER, WHO LIVES THERE!
GLADLY, MR. BRADLEY!

Liberty," was far from being one of the winners of the era. Gallagher endowed her with more life than any of the other artists who had their way with her.

Next he showed up over at the Ace line of comics in the spring of 1942, where he contributed to such magazines as *4 Favorites*, *Lightning Comics* and *Super-Mystery*. He drew a few adventures of Magno and Davey, yet another costumed superhero and boy companion team, and was responsible for a handful of covers, too. He apparently didn't sign anything while at Ace, except one *Super-Mystery Comics* cover.

By the summer of 1942 he was with the All American division of DC, an outfit he'd work for exclusively for the last four years he was in comics. Sheldon Mayer was his editor. "He was incredibly talented," Mayer told me recently. "There was a lot of electricity in his work, it was full of vigor and life." When I asked him if he could recall what Gallagher had looked like, he replied, "I remember him very well. I could even draw him for you right now. A tall boy...he wasn't overly heavy or anything like that, but he was large-boned...Well, you know, he was like the guys he drew. He could've been working in a mine or a steel mill...he had the nose to go with it. Although I don't think he was ever really in a fight, his nose always looked like it had been broken. He had a fighter's face." Mayer believes Gallagher was no older than in his early twenties when he first came around.

Gallagher took over the Atom from its less than inspired creators, Ben Flinton and Bill O'Connor, in *All American* #42 (September, 1942). This was the original Atom, redheaded college boy Al Pratt who shed "his meek personality for that of the compact little bundle of muscles." At about the same time Gallagher began drawing the Atom in *All Star Comics* as well. His initial story was in #13, the issue in which the JSA members journey to the planets, and he wasn't able to get a single fireplug into his decorative Mars sequence. With the next issue of *All Star* he added the prologues and epilogues to his art chores. And so he helped to create such noted villains as the Brain Wave and the Psycho-Pirate. Not a writer, Gallagher relied on scripts by Gardner Fox and Ted Udall for the most part.

Mayer soon gave him even more work to do. Gallagher added Red, White and Blue for *All American* and the King for *Flash Comics*. The first was about a soldier, sailor and marine team who fought spies and saboteurs, the other dealt with a master of disguise. When *Comics Cavalcade*, the

I ALWAYS SAY- LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP!
MESS THE WISE GUY UP!
AN' WITHOUT RODS! NOISE WOULD BRING TH- COPPERS!
THANKS FOR TRAVELING IN PAIRS, RATS--IT MAKES MY JOB EASIER!
BONK
NOISE OR NO NOISE, I'M CUTTIN' YA DOWN, ATOM- NOW!
SAVING MY LIFE IS PROBABLY THE FIRST GOOD DEED YOU'VE EVER DONE!
BANG
AND I'M SORRY ALREADY!
WELL, FOLKS--IT'S HALFWAY TIME IN THE THIRD QUARTER AND CALVIN IS STILL GIVING GROUND. FOR SOME REASON, BRONCHO BALLIS WAS YANKED FROM THE GAME AND IT SEEMS CALVIN IS IN FOR A LICKING.
YOU'VE GOT TO GET ME TO THAT GAME, ATOM!
DON'T WORRY, PATSY--YOU'LL BE THERE!
THESE TOUGH BOYS JUST WON'T GIVE UP EH? HOLD TIGHT, PATSY--HERE'S WHERE THE ATOM DOES SOME FANCY BROKEN FIELD RUNNING!

fat 15 cent quarterly, was added to the lineup Gallagher drew the first covers. His last regular feature was Wildcat in *Sensation Comics*. His work became increasingly cartoony and hurried-looking on these adventures of the boxer-crimefighter.

As Mayer recalls, Gallagher was "supporting four or five little brothers and sisters...trying to keep Welfare from splitting them up." Quite probably these pressures had an affect on his drawing. His last Wildcat ran in the June, 1946 issue of *Sensation*. Joe Gallagher left comics forever at that point. "I never found out what happened to him," Mayer told me. "He seemed to vanish into thin air."

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THE GOLDEN AGE

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